

IFC Presidents Vote For Removal of SAE

By Kathy Lin
EDITOR IN CHIEF

The Sigma Alpha Epsilon fraternity was expelled from the Interfraternity Council on Wednesday. Since “MIT only recognizes fraternities that are members of the IFC,... SAE is no longer recognized by MIT,” according to an IFC statement provided by IFC President Christopher P. Child ’06.

Because SAE was an associate member, rather than a full member, the Presidents’ Council had the right to vote to remove them from the IFC at any time. SAE was previously de-recognized by the IFC in January 2000 after an underage drinking incident and re-recognized as an associate member at the end of last spring.

“The outcome of [Wednesday] night’s vote was disappointing,” wrote SAE President Neil J. Kelly ’06 in a statement from the fraternity.

Expulsion not disciplinary

The motion for expulsion was passed by the IFC Presidents’ Council with a majority, although the actual vote could not be disclosed, Child said. The reason for expulsion was that “some of the presidents felt that SAE hadn’t lived up to the standard of being an associate member,” Child said.

The IFC’s Judicial Committee had been investigating a December

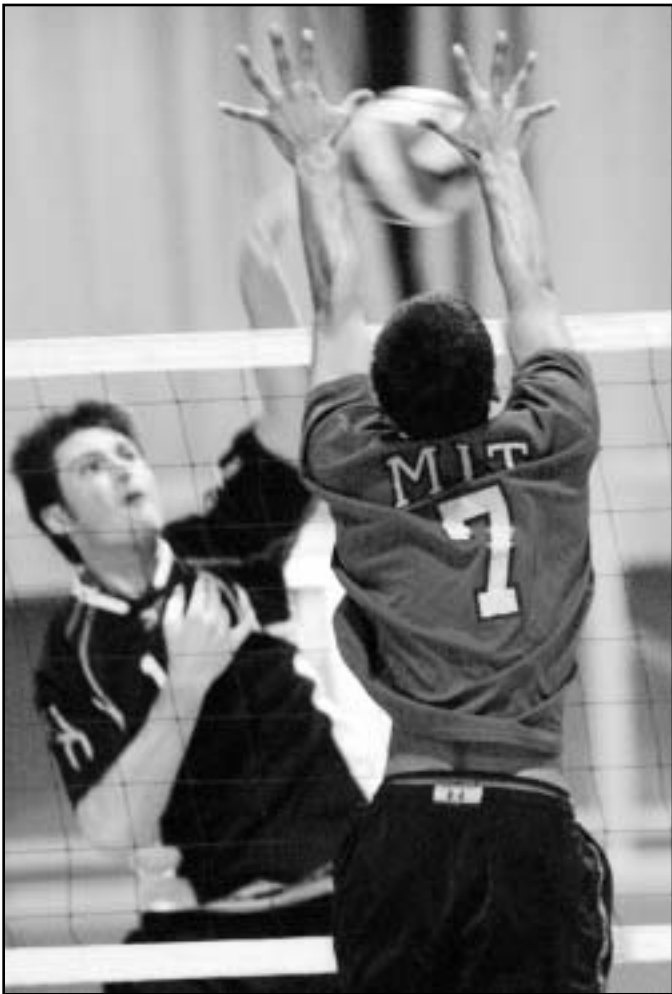
party held at an Allston house where four SAE members were arrested. The expulsion “was in no way a punishment for any of that,” Child said. The “presidents were aware that there was an investigation,” but it had not yet concluded by Wednesday, so there “wasn’t anything for them to find out,” he said.

It has not yet been decided whether the IFC’s investigation into the party will continue now that SAE is not a member of the IFC, Child said.

SAE to reapply for membership

SAE can petition the IFC for readmission after three months, Child wrote. “If they are readmitted, they will begin the associate member program as a new member,” he wrote. A fraternity must be an associate member for at least one year, then a probationary member for six months, before it can be a full member.

“We will continue to work closely with our alumni, the MIT administration, and the IFC with the intent of reapplying for membership in three months,” Kelly wrote. “We are excited about several upcoming public service projects which will help to strengthen our application and show that we are an asset to the Greek community,” he wrote.



DAVID GANDY—THE TECH

Praveen Pamidimukkala ’08 blocks the ball against 11th ranked Endicott College last Tuesday. The ninth ranked Engineers suffered their first defeat of the season, falling to 16-1.

Mass. Ave. Construction Begins amid Complaints

By Beckett W. Sterner
NEWS EDITOR

Massachusetts Avenue between Memorial Drive and Lafayette Square will undergo construction starting this March to improve the pavement and sidewalks, as well as to redesign the intersection of Main Street, Columbia Street and Mass. Ave.

Parts of the project drew criti-

cism from MIT and Cambridge community members at a forum held yesterday for failure to address bicycle path safety, pedestrian crossing safety, and the elimination of 30 unmetered parking spots on the western side of Mass. Ave.

The construction will run from March, 2005 through September,

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GSC Presents Survey Data, Ideas on Grad Student Life

By Kathy Dobson
ASSOCIATE NEWS EDITOR

Graduate Student Council members presented recommendations for ways to improve graduate advising to about 150 students, faculty members, and administrators on Tuesday. The recommendations include increasing communication among students, faculty, departments, and the Institute, and providing resources that are more accessible to

students.

The recommendations are based on an analysis of questions from the 2004 Graduate Student Life Survey and suggestions from a series of focus groups that met last November.

About a third of respondents wanted more contact with their advisor, the survey found, and while

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B. D. COLEN—THE TECH

Students with cardboard “Free Hugs” signs offer to hug passersby in Lobby 7 on Tuesday morning.

Candidates for Undergraduate Association President and Vice President Elections

John M. Cloutier ’06 and Jessica H. Lowell ’07
Calvin G. Sizer ’06 and Bryan D. Owens ’07

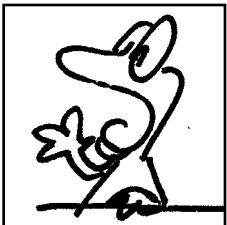
See page 12 for a list of candidates for Class Council positions.

Source: Tiffany L. Seto ’06. UA Elections Commissioner



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predicts
Academy
Award win-
ners

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NEWS

MIT does well in poorly designed
postdoc survey

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WORLD & NATION

Kansas Attorney General Seeks Abortion Records

By Jodi Wilgoren
THE NEW YORK TIMES
TOPEKA, KAN.

Kansas Attorney General Phill Kline, a Republican who has made fighting abortion a staple of his two years in the post, is demanding the complete medical files of scores of women and girls who had late-term abortions, saying Thursday that he needs the information to prosecute criminal cases.

Kline emphasized statutory rape at a news conference here, but he also spoke obliquely of other crimes that court documents suggest could include doctors' providing illegal late-term abortions and health professionals failing to heed a state law that requires the reporting of suspected child sexual abuse.

"When a 10-, 11- or 12-year-old child is pregnant, under Kansas law that child has been raped, and as the state's chief law enforcement official, it is my obligation to investigate child rape, in order to protect Kansas children," Kline said.

Palestinian Cabinet Approved, With Few Arafat Allies

By Alan Cowell
THE NEW YORK TIMES
RAMALLAH, WEST BANK

The Palestinian parliament overwhelmingly approved a new Cabinet on Thursday, composed mainly of professionals rather than politicians, ending days of crisis and marking a break with the Yasser Arafat era.

All but seven of the 24 Cabinet members were newcomers, many of them qualified specialists with doctorates in fields including education, electrical engineering and economics.

Prime Minister Ahmed Qureia and the deputy prime minister, Nabil Shaath, formerly the foreign minister, were among the few who survived a radical pruning of Arafat loyalists that strengthened the reform-minded President Mahmoud Abbas. Abbas has pledged to make Palestinian public life more open and effective, reinforcing efforts to secure peace with Israel.

"The majority are new," Shaath told reporters as newly endorsed ministers, legislators and journalists milled around the courtyard of the parliament, located in a former school here. "Rejuvenation is the name of the game." Saeb Erakat, another Arafat associate who withdrew from the Cabinet earlier this week, said: "What you witnessed is the real democracy of the Palestinian people."

New York Shows Off Its Best In Bid for 2012 Olympics

By Lynn Zinser and Jim Rutenberg
THE NEW YORK TIMES
NEW YORK

The selling job reflected the brashness and resources of the city itself: Mayor Michael R. Bloomberg inviting Barbara Walters and Meryl Streep to enlist their star power; a war room in the Plaza Hotel filled with behind-the-scenes scrambling to answer any question and allay any concern; a dinner at the mayor's mansion, where he and his guests burst into song when Paul Simon reached the chorus of "The Boxer."

After four days of wooing and cajoling the 13-members of the International Olympic Committee's evaluation commission, New York City officials bid farewell to the panel on Thursday, confident they had impressed them with their message: that a 2012 Olympics in New York would dazzle the world as they had dazzled the commission.

But whether the celebrities, the fireworks and the glitter were enough to push New York past Paris, London, Moscow and Madrid, Spain, in the fight for those games will not be decided until July 6, when the full 117-member IOC votes on the winner.

Putin Unyielding While Bush Critiques Russian Democracy

By Elisabeth Bumiller and David E. Sanger
THE NEW YORK TIMES
BRATISLAVA, SLOVAKIA

President Bush expressed concern on Thursday night about Russia's commitment to democracy in a sometimes tense and awkward encounter with President Vladimir V. Putin. Putin, at times visibly uncomfortable, refused to yield.

"Democracies have certain things in common — a rule of law and protection of minorities and a free press and a viable political opposition," Bush said after a meeting that lasted more than an hour, chiding Putin gently, though more directly than ever before. "I was able to share my concerns about Russia's commitment in fulfilling these universal principles."

Putin tartly responded that he would listen to some of Bush's ideas but not comment on others, and said that debating "whether we have more or less democracy is not the right thing to do."

The Russian president also said that the U.S. Electoral College was in essence a "secret ballot" and pointedly noted, "It is not considered undemocratic, is it?"

The joint news conference after

their summit meeting at the medieval Bratislava Castle overlooking the Danube was designed to portray unity, and the two leaders used the occasion to emphasize common ground. But it also offered unusual moments of heat as Bush continued to press a campaign for democracy and liberty that has received mixed reviews during his four-day European tour. It appeared to have struck one of its more discordant notes with Putin.

The exchanges stood in contrast to the reception Bush received hours earlier during his speech to thousands of enthusiastic Slovaks in Bratislava's main Hviezdoslavovo Square, where Bush also appeared to caution Putin not to meddle, as he did recently in Ukraine, with the democratic advances in a region that Russia still considers its sphere of influence.

The day produced no dramatic breakthroughs. The most significant agreement struck as a result of the meeting was a joint commitment to speed up the much-delayed securing and dismantling of some of Russia's excess nuclear materials. The two sides also jointly announced a handful of modest agreements, including an effort to limit the spread of

shoulder-fired missiles and some other deals already committed to on trade and energy.

On an important issue of tension — Russia's continued sale of equipment to Iran for its nuclear program — there appeared to be little progress, though a senior administration official said the president was "satisfied" that Putin had reiterated his pledge not to sell nuclear fuel to Iran without an agreement that the spent fuel would be returned to Russia.

That has been important to the United States because spent fuel can be converted to weapons-grade plutonium. Earlier this month, Putin talked with Iran about expanding their nuclear relationship, a subject the official said did not come up in Thursday's conversation.

Under the nuclear agreement, according to one official who was involved, most of the excess weapons fuel in Russia would be secured or converted to commercial fuel by around 2008, four years earlier than anticipated. The two also agreed to form new emergency-response procedures if nuclear material went missing or a "dirty bomb" or a nuclear weapon fell into the wrong hands.

In Duress, Pope Gets Surgery To Relieve Inability to Breathe

By Ian Fisher
THE NEW YORK TIMES
ROME

Pope John Paul II underwent a tracheotomy on Thursday night to ease breathing problems, a serious turn for the worse in the health of the already fragile, 84-year-old spiritual leader of the world's one billion Catholics.

Only two weeks ago, he was released from the Gemelli Hospital complex here in Rome after a nine-day stay, and since then Vatican officials had said he was slowly regaining his health.

But on Thursday morning, the pope was rushed again to Gemelli with what was described as a new bout of the flu, fever and spasms of the larynx, the same ailments that

had forced his first hospitalization on Feb. 1. Then on Thursday evening, the Vatican announced that doctors, in response to an "acute breathing insufficiency," had performed a tracheotomy — cut a hole at the base of the neck directly into the windpipe.

"The Holy Father was informed and gave his consent," the pope's chief spokesman, Joachin Navarro-Valls, himself a medical doctor, said in a statement. "The operation, which began at 8:20 p.m. and ended at 8:50 p.m., was carried out and ended successfully."

The pope was conscious and alert after the operation, a top Italian government official said. He was to spend the night in his own hospital room, the Vatican statement said.

Despite the operation's apparent

success, both the procedure, and the underlying conditions that made it necessary, seem likely to intensify questions about the pope's ability to continue to lead the church if he remains badly debilitated.

Because the cut is made below the voice box, medical experts say, people with tracheotomies cannot speak. The procedure, the experts say, is usually carried out in order to place the patient on a ventilator. ANSA, an Italian news agency, reported that the pope had been placed on a ventilator after the operation.

In all, the pope's mobility and ability to communicate may be severely hampered, a situation that some officials here have cited as an unexplored, worst-case scenario for the functioning of the church.

WEATHER

Relentless or Bountiful?

By David Flagg
STAFF METEOROLOGIST

Now that we are two months past the winter solstice, chances are your perspective on this winter falls into one of those two categories. After this morning's generous dusting, there are no doubt a few who may now be inclined toward the former. However, this storm was no match for what happened here in 1969. From Feb. 24–28 that year, Boston recorded 101 consecutive hours of snow, totaling 26.3" (66.8 cm). It marked the greatest total from a single storm until the record was surpassed by the Blizzard of 1978 and again by the Presidents' Day Storm in 2003.

As for our weather, snow this morning will gradually taper to flurries and leave us with seasonally cold temperatures and another shot at flurries on Saturday night. Although no blizzards are in the immediate forecast, model results in recent days reiterate the potential for a significant event early next week. Stay tuned!

The Weekend Outlook:

Today: Cold. Flurries taper off, skies will remain mostly cloudy. Winds diminish by afternoon. High 25°F (–4°C).

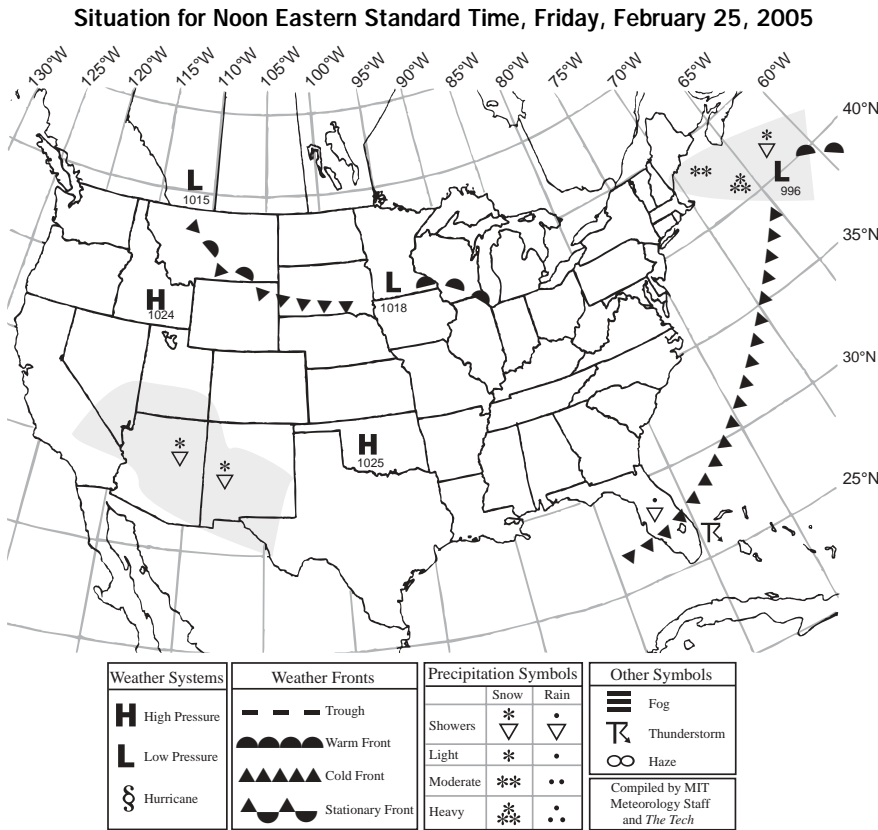
Tonight: Mostly cloudy. Low 16°F (–9°C).

Tomorrow: Some sun possible early, then becoming overcast with a chance of flurries toward evening. High 30°F (–1°C).

Tomorrow night: Decreasing clouds. Low 20°F (–7°C).

Sunday: Sun returns, but still seasonally cool. High 34°F (1°C).

Monday: Mostly sunny early with some melting, but clouds build late in advance of a possible storm at night. High 36°F (2°C).



One Third of Advisors for FDA On Vioxx Got Industry Money

By Gardiner Harris and Alex Berenson
THE NEW YORK TIMES

Ten of the 32 government drug advisers who last week endorsed continued marketing of the huge-selling pain pills Celebrex, Bextra and Vioxx have consulted in recent years for the drugs' makers, according to disclosures in medical journals and other public records.

If the 10 advisers had not cast their votes, the committee would have voted 12-8 that Bextra should be withdrawn and 14-8 that Vioxx should not return to the market. The 10 advisers with company ties voted 9-1 to keep Bextra on the market and 9-1 for Vioxx's return.

The votes of the 10 did not substantially influence the committee's decision on Celebrex because only one committee member voted that Celebrex should be withdrawn.

Eight of the 10 members said in interviews that their past relationships with the drug companies did not influence their votes. The two others did not respond to phone or

e-mail messages.

Researchers with ties to industry commonly serve on Food and Drug Administration advisory panels, but their presence has long been a contentious issue. The agency has said that it tries to balance expertise — often found among those who have conducted clinical trials of the drugs in question or otherwise studied them — with potential conflicts of interest.

The Center for Science in the Public Interest, an advocacy group in Washington that maintains a large database of scientists' industry ties, analyzed the panelists' affiliations at the request of The New York Times. The center has been a critic of the FDA and of the pharmaceutical industry.

Dr. Sheldon Krinsky, a science policy expert at Tufts University, said such conflicts were common on FDA advisory panels. The FDA often conceals these conflicts, and studies have shown that, taken as a whole, money does influence scientific judgments, Krinsky said.

He added, "FDA has to work

harder to fill panels with people without conflicts, and if they feel they have the best committee, they at least ought to make it transparent."

But Dan Troy, the agency's former general counsel, said that finding knowledgeable experts without financial conflicts is difficult.

The committee took nine votes — three for each drug — on whether Celebrex, Bextra or Vioxx hurt the heart, should continue to be marketed and, if so, under what restrictions. These votes were important to the three companies — Merck, Pfizer and Novartis — that came before the committee.

Ten members of the panel have worked in some capacity in recent years for Merck, the maker of Vioxx; Pfizer, the maker of Celebrex and Bextra; or Novartis, which is applying to sell Prexige.

Of the 30 votes cast by the 10 panel members on whether Celebrex, Bextra and Vioxx should continue to be marketed, 28 favored the drugs.

Syria Promises to Remove Forces From Lebanon after U.S. Pressure

By Joel Brinkley and Hassan M. Fattah
THE NEW YORK TIMES

WASHINGTON

Syria, responding to pressure from Washington and the European Union, announced Thursday that it would move its military forces throughout Lebanon to the Bekaa region area near the Syrian border and, eventually, out of Lebanon altogether.

"The decision to withdraw has been taken," Defense Minister Abdul-Rahim Murad told Syrian television. "What remains is the exact timing."

President Bush and President Jacques Chirac of France, this week both demanded a Syrian withdrawal from Lebanon, and on Thursday the U.N. secretary-general, Kofi Annan, said he welcomed the announcement from Damascus but urged the Syrians to withdraw by April. A State Department spokeswoman, Darla Jordan, said, "This needs to happen immediately."

Critics of Syria's role were wary, particularly over how significant any troop pullback would be and whether it would do anything to resolve Syria's other deep entanglements in Lebanon.

Many of Syria's 14,000 soldiers

in the country were redeployed from major cities like Beirut to the Bekaa region last year, and the latest announcement is likely to affect only a fraction of the troops.

In addition, senior Lebanese and Syrian officials acknowledge that when the last Syrian soldier departs, Lebanon will still be largely controlled by Syria, because the military presence is only the most visible element of Syrian control.

Walid Jumblatt, the Druse leader who is a longtime critic of Syria, told Al-Jazeera television on Thursday that "we demand a fixed timetable for a comprehensive withdrawal." He added that "today the Syrian intelligence service controls everything" in Lebanon.

Tens of thousands of Lebanese protesters have taken to the streets of Beirut in the last week, since the assassination of the former prime minister, Rafik al-Hariri, demanding that Syrian troops leave the country. Though investigators have not determined who set the bomb that killed Hariri, Syrian officials acknowledge that they are being blamed even though they have proclaimed their innocence.

"Syria cannot withstand this tremendous international pressure, from the United States, from

France," said Imad Moustapha, the Syrian ambassador to the United States. "We will leave Lebanon, but we will not do it in a disorganized way. What our enemies really want is for there to be an immediate withdrawal that will be humiliating for Syria." Neither he nor anyone else would stipulate a timetable for the withdrawal.

"We do not interfere in the Lebanese elections," Moustapha said, "but we do use our influence to form our own party lists," which dominate the Lebanese parliament. That, he said, is not likely to change.

In Beirut, Prime Minister Omar Karami, reacting to the Syrian withdrawal announcement, told Reuters that "we are interwoven with" Syria "in all fields — religious, political, national, social and economic."

Farid Abboud, the Lebanese ambassador to the United States, said: "Even if they withdraw completely, Syrians will still have their important political constituency. The political dynamics will continue."

Up to 600,000 Syrians work in Lebanon, filling menial roles as waiters, construction and service workers that Lebanese do not want to fill. The money they send home is critical for the Syrian economy.

In a Wave of Attacks, Insurgents Kill At Least 25 with Suicide, Road Bombs

By Edward Wong
THE NEW YORK TIMES

TIKRIT, IRAQ

Insurgents unleashed a wave of attacks across central and northern Iraq on Thursday, killing at least 25 people and injuring dozens in one of the deadliest days of violence since the country held free elections less than a month ago.

In the most lethal assault of the day, a suicide bomber detonated a car packed with explosives at police headquarters here in Saddam Hussein's hometown, killing at least 10 Iraqis and wounding at least 35, American military officials said. The blast set nearby cars ablaze and could be heard for miles across the city.

The bomber was apparently wearing a police uniform, underscoring the fact that insurgents have infiltrated Iraqi security forces and have stolen equipment from the Iraqi police and military.

The explosion took place on a day when senior Iraqi security officials met with the top American

general in Iraq and other American commanders here, but it is unclear whether the attack was timed to coincide with the meeting. Elsewhere, two American soldiers were killed in separate incidents by roadside bombs, the deadliest type of weapon employed by insurgents against the American military.

But most of the day's fatalities were Iraqis, and most were in the so-called Sunni triangle, where opposition to the American presence and the Iraqi government run high. The violence indicated that the insurgency, led by the formerly governing Sunni Arabs, has not quieted down despite the elections.

In fact, the vote on Jan. 30 may have left the Sunni Arabs feeling more disenfranchised than ever, since potential Sunni voters and politicians largely boycotted the electoral process, allowing the long-oppressed Shiites and Kurds to seize an overwhelming majority of seats in the constitutional assembly.

bly.

As the victorious politicians jockey to form a new government, they will have to confront one of the toughest problems plaguing Iraq since the fall of Saddam: how to bring recalcitrant Sunni Arabs into the political process and persuade them to lay down their arms and accept their minority status in the new society. Shiite and Kurdish leaders have said they intend to give senior positions in the incoming government to Sunni Arabs to ensure broad representation.

One of the attacks on Thursday raised the specter of sectarian civil violence. In the insurgent stronghold of Iskandariya, south of the capital, a suicide car bomber blew himself up in front of the office of a prominent Shiite political party, killing at least five people, including three police officers and a child who was strolling along the road at the time, The Associated Press reported, citing government officials.

Study in Texas Sees Race Bias in Searches

By Ralph Blumenthal
THE NEW YORK TIMES

HOUSTON

A racial-profiling study that analyzed millions of police traffic stops in Texas in 2002 and 2003 has found that black and Hispanic drivers were far more likely to be searched though not more likely to be carrying contraband like drugs.

The report said minority drivers in Texas, previously found more likely than non-Hispanic whites to be halted by the police, were, once stopped, also disproportionately subjected to "consent searches," in which officers without warrants or probable cause ask — critics say pressure — drivers to agree to a search.

The study was conducted with the help of an Austin consultant, the Steward Research Group, and was issued Thursday in Austin by the Texas Criminal Justice Coalition, a network of advocacy groups monitoring law enforcement, civil rights and prison issues.

The researchers examined reports of several million traffic stops by 1,060 police and sheriff's departments across Texas. It found that about two of every three agencies searched blacks and Hispanics at higher rates than those for non-Hispanic whites.

AFL-CIO Leader Backs Shifting Money to Unions' Organizing

By Steven Greenhouse
THE NEW YORK TIMES

With several unions threatening to bolt the AFL-CIO, John J. Sweeney, the federation's president, said Thursday that he would support cutting individual unions' contributions to the federation to make more money available to organize workers.

Sweeney gave broad support to proposals made by several labor leaders who assert that labor needs to devote far more money to organizing to stop labor's longtime slide.

Sweeney said he would recommend a specific percentage cut in the per capita contributions that 58 member unions make to the AFL-CIO after consulting further with other union leaders. The presidents of the Teamsters and the Service Employees International Union have called for a 50 percent cut, amounting to about \$35 million.

"We're looking at how to change the role of the fed to bring about more growth," Sweeney said in a telephone news conference. "Unless we grow, no other strategy will be effective."

As an unusual debate swirls within labor about what changes are needed, Sweeney said unions should have their contributions to the AFL-CIO reduced only if they pledged to invest heavily in organizing.

Labor leaders said Sweeney's announcement would mean tens of millions of dollars more for organizing and could cause the AFL-CIO to reduce its staff and responsibilities and focus more on politics and legislative matters.

Terror Suspect's Family Says U.S. Restricts Access to Son

By Eric Lichtblau and James Dao
THE NEW YORK TIMES

WASHINGTON

The parents of Ahmed Omar Abu Ali, the American student accused of plotting the assassination of President Bush, charged Thursday that the government was restricting their access to their son by limiting what they could tell the public about their jailhouse conversations.

But Justice Department officials said the jailhouse restrictions under consideration were standard in sensitive terrorism cases as a way of preventing jailed suspects from passing coded messages to outside accomplices.

Prosecutors have imposed tight restrictions on about a dozen terrorism defendants since the Sept. 11 attacks, officials said, including Sheik Omar Abdel Rahman, a prisoner whose lawyer, Lynne F. Stewart, was convicted two weeks ago of smuggling messages out of jail.

The family of Ali, who was held without charges for 20 months in Saudi Arabia before U.S. officials returned him to Virginia on Monday to face charges of providing support to terrorists, said the government asked one of their lawyers to agree to a set of tight conditions before family members could visit him in custody in Alexandria, Va.

Family members said that in order to see Ali, they were told they would have to agree not to discuss with the media anything he told them, to have an agent from the FBI present for the meeting, and to speak only in English.

Economic Posts Unfilled Despite Big Pushes Ahead

By Edmund L. Andrews and Elizabeth Becker
THE NEW YORK TIMES

WASHINGTON

Even as he pursues a sweeping agenda to overhaul Social Security and the tax code, President Bush's economic team is thinner now than at any time since he first took office.

About one-third of the senior policy positions at the Treasury Department, which is central in both the tax and Social Security battles, are empty or about to be vacated.

The office of U.S. trade representative, which is in the midst of both global and regional trade negotiations, is being filled by a caretaker and Bush has yet to nominate a permanent replacement.

And though Bush announced Wednesday that Harvey S. Rosen would be chairman of the Council of Economic Advisers, Rosen is expected to return to his teaching post at Princeton by summer's end.

Administration officials said they were pushing to fill the top economic jobs quickly, and people close to the administration said they were close to filling at least one major spot at the Treasury Department.

But some of Bush's supporters worry that the sluggishness in making nominations will close what they see as a narrow window of opportunity to push major initiatives through Congress.

"The first 12 months are really the most crucial," said Stephen Moore, president of the Free Enterprise Fund, a conservative advocacy group that is campaigning for Bush's plan to partially privatize Social Security.

OPINION

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Convenience, Not Racism, to Blame

In response to a Feb. 18 letter [“Anna’s Workers Not Respected Enough”] lamenting the lack of tips in the on-campus restaurants, let me offer a few thoughts:

For one, I agree that tips are an understated part of the food service community. Having worked two tip-dependent jobs in high school, I understand how a few quarters from each person really do add up, and really are appreciated.

However, to accuse MIT students of being elitist, spoiled, or even worse, racist is completely out of line. I am willing to venture that the primary reason tips are low on campus is that most students are paying with TechCash. I am not offering this as an excuse, as it is surely not difficult to take out an extra dollar with the ID card, but the fact of the matter is, with no money being exchanged and no “tip” line on the receipt to be signed, a tip probably does not occur to most people.

I highly doubt that we are so pretentious as to not tip at Thailand Cafe or when we sit down at Pour House (where my friends and I tip on the full price of a burger even when we’re paying half on Saturdays), but it is simply a slip of

mind. Do the employees at the student center restaurants deserve a tip? Sure. Is it hard for us to do? Certainly not. Do MIT students not like tipping black or hispanic people? I think that question is best answered with the good, old, “WTF, mate?”

Alisha R. Schor '07

Comments Out of Line

In the Feb. 22 issue of *The Tech*, Ben Friedman shouts out a hollow apologia for Larry Summers’ condescending and reactionary remarks made last month. In his letter to the editor, Friedman accuses President Susan Hockfield of “political correctness” for refusing to re-fight a battle already won.

Harvard has released a transcript of Summers’ remarks so that people can judge for themselves. Having read them several times now, it is hard for me to reconcile what he says with either a sober, fair-minded assessment of the situation or with the extensive and comprehensive data available on the subject. In short, the comments were so out there, and so out of the scientific context, that there isn’t any reason to either state them in the first place or debate them further.

Apparently, now, Summers himself feels this way. That leaves Ben Friedman out on his own. Read what President Summers wrote in a letter to the faculty of Harvard. He expresses regret for his remarks and discusses the art of being educated:

“As I now know better than I did a month ago, the matters I discussed at NBER [National Bureau of Economic Research] are the subject of intense debate across a range of disciplines. Colleagues from these fields have taken time to educate me further. My January remarks substantially understated the impact of socialization and discrimination, including implicit attitudes — patterns of thought to which all of us are unconsciously subject. The issue of gender difference is far more complex than comes through in my comments, and my remarks about variability went beyond what the research has established.” Both the remarks and the letter to the faculty may be found at <http://www.president.harvard.edu/speeches/>.

I do hope that Ben Friedman and other critics show the same willingness to be educated as Larry Summers has shown.

Peter Swedock
Laboratory for Information
and Decision Systems



Opinion Policy

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Guest columns are opinion articles submitted by members of the MIT or local community and have the author’s name in italics. Columns without italics are written by *Tech* staff.

Errata

In Tuesday’s issue, the feature “Undergrad Lands Role in Coach Carter Movie” should have been attributed to Tiffany Chen, a staff reporter.

Because of an editing error, the photography essay [“Students Perform at CSC Chinese New Year Banquet”] on page 10 of Tuesday’s issue was incorrectly attributed to Omari Stephens. It should have been attributed to Brian Hemond and Scot Frank.

To Reach Us

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Senior Segue Testament to Grad Student Involvement

Nelson Lau

Although I have moved on from the graduate student body at MIT, I read the cover story “Senior Segue Phase Out Delayed”

Letter to the Editor

When I was an active member of the Tang Hall Resident Association and lead the authorship of the 2003 Housing Strategy Group report on Senior Segue, I campaigned for the graduate students’ cause to maintain their right to their fair share of the campus housing pool. I was even under the impression that devoting precious time outside my studies to help shape school policy was worthwhile. Funny how as an alumni now, I observe regression instead of progress from the “legacy” of my work.

Why am I not surprised that Senior Segue is continuing instead of being phased out? One reason may be perhaps that grad students have become complacent and too optimistic that simply documenting their viewpoints in a report will somehow effect policy. Grad students don’t make policy decisions — admin-

istrators do. At the onset, administrators get barraged with viewpoints from various interests — undergrads, students’ parents, donors, the corporation, and maybe grad students. Whichever viewpoints resonate most strongly in the administrators’ minds ultimately influence the administrators’ decisions the greatest. In the housing decision, undergrads and their parents currently exert the greatest influence, so the undergrads will remain the highest priority in what is still a completely cumbersome housing management system.

In politics, the loudest voice triumphs, and I see the senior segue decision as an outcome of currently diminished grad student voice over this important housing issue. Not long ago, I vocalized that grad students were the majority matriculated in this institution and cited the financial hardships that drive high grad student demand for on-campus housing. Looking back, I add that the program for offering on-campus housing preference to first-year grad students was a huge draw for me to attend MIT over other institutions for graduate study. And with the later years of on campus housing, I was able to enjoy additional learning environments of community building, things I would have dearly missed had I lived off-campus. These issues are things that grad students need to vocalize again and again to the administration.

Remind administrators that happy grad students living on-campus are vital components of MIT’s vibrancy.

Graduate students at MIT are not out to compete away the undergrads for housing. The happy coexistence of grads and undergrads is a good thing, and I do not minimize the many merits that senior segue brings. However, the trend I observe is that slots for grads are simply being converted to more slots for undergrads, with no compensation or balancing of room deficits for grad students. If Senior Segue’s persistence, although not ideal, becomes a necessity, provisions in the housing system must be executed (not just debated in housing reports and meetings) to ensure enough slots are available for graduate students. For example, MIT administrators’ current housing policy is drawing more undergrads from “off-campus” houses (Frats, ILGs) into on-campus dorms — why not now allow more graduate students to fill those “off-campus” vacancies that have more affordable rents, MIT sponsorship, and

opportunities for community building? The article in that same issue of *The Tech* on Fenway house taking in more graduate students is exactly the model I indicate above.

There are probably numerous other suggestions to close the gap of on-campus graduate student housing to undergrad on-campus housing. However, grad students need to press these suggestions harder and scrutinize administrators more because I have heard time and again the suggestion of curtail-

ing the entering class enrollment, and that suggestion seems to go unheeded every year. Hey, I realize the administrators at MIT have a tough job to do, but the onus now is on grad students to talk ever more with those administrators, give them a piece of your mind, and perhaps strengthen the influence with administrators so that promises don’t give way to empty outcomes.

Nelson Lau is a member of the Class of 2004.

Perhaps grad students have become complacent and too optimistic that simply documenting their viewpoints in a report will somehow effect policy.

Dubya the Great

Why President Bush May Go Down in History as One of the Greats

Zachary Ozer

Up until very recently, I was one of the biggest skeptics of the Bush administration. Drilling Alaska, Guantanamo detainees, preventive wars, and a tanking economy: these are but a few problems that have been blamed on George W. Bush and his administration. Many would argue that the president inherited these problems and that there was nothing he could have done to avoid it. However, George Bush does have one inexcusable character flaw: he’s a Yankee who thinks he’s from Texas.

In reality, Bush was born and raised deep in the heart of Connecticut. The first time Texans ever heard of George W. Bush was after his father lost the 1950 Senatorial race in Connecticut and the family moved to Midland. While he did spend ten of his formative years in Texas, he also went to Phillips Academy prep school.

Before entering high school, Texans are like young padawans: they all possess the power to be Texan, but without the proper training during high school, they may head toward either the dark side or the light side of the Texas Force. I was fortunate. I spent my entire childhood in Texas. I learned how to drink, drive, grill, and shoot like a Texan. I believe in opening the door for a lady and paying for her dinner.

Since arriving up north, I’ve been very disappointed by the fact that I don’t have a Texan accent, even though I’ve always used y’all. Apparently, this problem is quite common. A study published in the New York Times (“Scholars of Twang Track All the ‘Y’alls’ in Texas” by Ralph Blumenthal)

found that Texans living abroad (i.e., not in Texas) were more likely to use “y’all” than those living at home. This may explain why Bush seems so overtly Texan: his training ended abruptly, he headed towards the dark side of the force, and now all he has is his twang. To this day, I’m willing to bet he drinks, drives, grills, and shoots like a Yankee, but talks Texan.

That’s probably why he was such a terrible governor: he’s an awful Texan. Somehow, Karl Rove convinced the people of Texas to support Bush over the Democratic incumbent Ann Richards. She was a Texan woman through and through: smart as a whip and balls of brass. Texans quickly realized that they needed one of their own in the Governor’s mansion, and the only way we saw to get rid of Bush was to put him in the White House.

The fact that Bush wasn’t a true Texan didn’t inherently imply that he would have an unsuccessful presidency (for a counter-example, see Lyndon Johnson). Instead, his MIA status and the tanking economy were the early indicators that Americans could have a rough road ahead. I couldn’t believe the lack of leadership he showed during his first months in office. Many thought the man had jumped ship (compare that to Whitman’s Lincoln in “O Captain! My Captain!”). Then the Iraq War came. Why didn’t the administration send someone to the U.N. with evidence of the WMDs like Kennedy did with Adali Stevenson? It was outrageous. The nation quickly realized that the evidence eventually produced to support the existence of WMDs in Iraq was shaky at best. Many believed that irrespective of this fact, a preventive war to overthrow Saddam

Hussein would be worth the benefit to the Iraqi people. I never included myself in the ranks of this group.

Lately, I’ve been coming around. I think I fell off the bandwagon when I found out that the inaugural ball was Tux and Boots. What really did it for me, though, was the Iraqi election. I never thought that the administration would pull off a remotely successful election. I was positive that Jan. 30 would mark the beginning of the Iraqi Civil War, not successful elections. One could file the objection that all of the candidates were “USDA Approved,” but irrespective of this fact, voter turnout ended up at more than 60 percent despite all the threats of violence. Even in the United States, we rarely conduct elections with turnout as high as the Iraqis. It no longer seems unlikely that the Iraqis will write a constitution, establish a stable government, and elect their executives, and coalition forces will withdraw as the savior of the Iraqi people. Score one for Bush.

Moreover, the U.S. economy is coming around. Unemployment numbers are dropping. As great as this sounds, it’s a bit deceptive since the workforce isn’t growing. Economics majors would tell you that this means that people are dropping out of the workforce too fast by retiring early and there aren’t enough people to replace them, which makes it easier to keep down the percentage of people who are unemployed. In addition, the Dow is back above 10,000, despite the setbacks resulting from corporate scandals. Many would argue that our new set of accounting standards has helped to restore faith in our corporations, especially our accountants. One could say that the U.S. economy is slowly recovering, but that it will soon be stronger than ever before. Overall, not too shabby considering that we were headed into a recession four years ago.

What really did it for me, though, was the State of the Union. I felt it was well-written

and amazing because of the policy positions it expressed. I know some felt it was vague on many issues. I disagree. Bush specifically stated the problems he felt this nation faces and his solutions. He concisely stated many foreign policy positions I never knew the administration had developed. The man talked about social security for 15 minutes out of a 50 minutes speech. While I may not agree with his views, I think it’s an issue we need to address. In addition, I know few presidents who have talked about social security for this length of time throughout the course of their entire presidency, let alone during the state of the union. And while your girlfriend may tell you (and herself) that length doesn’t matter, if there’s nothing there, nothing gets done.

Many would argue that these factors don’t matter because history takes a deeper look at the presidency and looks at more important issues than the economy and successful wars. According to these people, history cares about just wars, civil rights, the environment, and the treatment of the poor, huddled, masses. Let us compare Bush to some of the greats: Jefferson, Lincoln, Eisenhower, and Kennedy. Jefferson started an unnecessary and very controversial war with the Barbary Pirates. People felt it wasn’t our business to try to stabilize the region. Lincoln suspended habeas corpus and imprisoned thousands without trial. Most of the South hated the “oppressive” Republicans for decades to come. Eisenhower mowed over vast natural preserves to create the interstate highway system. Kennedy was one of the most hated presidents in his own time and one of the most revered as a martyr. Johnson did far more for the poor and oppressed than any president before or after with his Great Society program. But we remember Kennedy’s success in the Cuban Missile Crisis and Johnson’s failure in Vietnam. Hopefully some of this sounds familiar. Is it possible that we are all fortunate enough to be living in the time of a great president?

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Scientists Ask Questions

Chen Zhao

When I heard about Harvard President Lawrence Summers' now infamous National Bureau of Economic Research speech, I thought, "How stupid" because of its controversial nature. But I also thought, "How refreshing." Summers has always been known as an honest, if perhaps untactful, man. His words are not sugar-coated to help the PR department sleep more easily — something difficult to come by in the modern world where college presidents oftentimes seem more like politicians than academic leaders. It is for this precise reason that it would be unfortunate if Summers loses his job, as it seems he might, over this recent controversy.

Summers' speech addressed the significant disparity between the number of men and women in science and engineering departments at leading research universities. The transcript has now been released, so we no longer need to speculate over the context in which he made his remarks.

Summers mentioned three possible reasons for the observed disparity. One is the fact that gender discrimination exists. I do not think that anyone will disagree with that point.

The second reason mentioned was the fact that women have to live with different familial roles and societal expectations than men do, which might lead to women being less likely than men to want to work the enormous number of hours expected if one is to really excel in his/her field. Again, I do not believe there to be much disagreement on this point.

The third reason was the possibility that there are innate differences between men and women in the area of science and engineering, and it has sparked enormous debate. Many have condemned Summers as sexist and rude, some even calling him a male chauvinistic pig. Women have complained that his remarks might lead others to think that it is okay to consider women inferior. Let's look at what he actually said and then consider the appropriateness of his words.

First, Summers never said that men are superior to women. He proposed that the

reason why the aforementioned disparity is greater in science than in other fields could be that there is some innate difference between men and women similar to innate differences in areas such as body weight or likelihood to commit crime. He did not conjecture as to what the mean science "ability" of men or women is, but he asked whether it could be the case that the standard deviation is larger for men than for women. Following this logic, he thought that it might be that since faculty members at top universities are many standard deviations above the mean of their field, there is a smaller pool of available women than men. Then he said that this, along with the other possibilities mentioned, might account for our observations.

Essentially, all Summers did was brainstorm out loud about different possible explanations for what he agrees is a serious problem that needs to be addressed. Summers is an accomplished economist, and he

did what a good scientist does. He was being creative and comprehensive in trying to explain a situation. We applaud scientists who ask questions, so why should we condemn Summers when he simply asked if innate differences could explain

the gender gap in science? The history of science is full of scientists proposing controversial ideas. Should they all have thought their ideas only to themselves?

Some have said that Summers was right to explore different explanations, but that he should have done so privately. Why should he be silenced because he is an influential person? If all the influential people in the world simply said what is pre-approved, then what is the point of them speaking at all? Also, let's give more credit to Summers' audience. Is it really realistic to think that some previously neutral person will become sexist because of what the president of Harvard said?

The worst charge that has been laid at Summers' feet is that he is hindering the progress of the feminist movement. This is absolutely ridiculous because Summers' goal in giving the speech was to promote identification of why women are getting left behind in science, and then to fix the problem. It could only be beneficial to the femi-

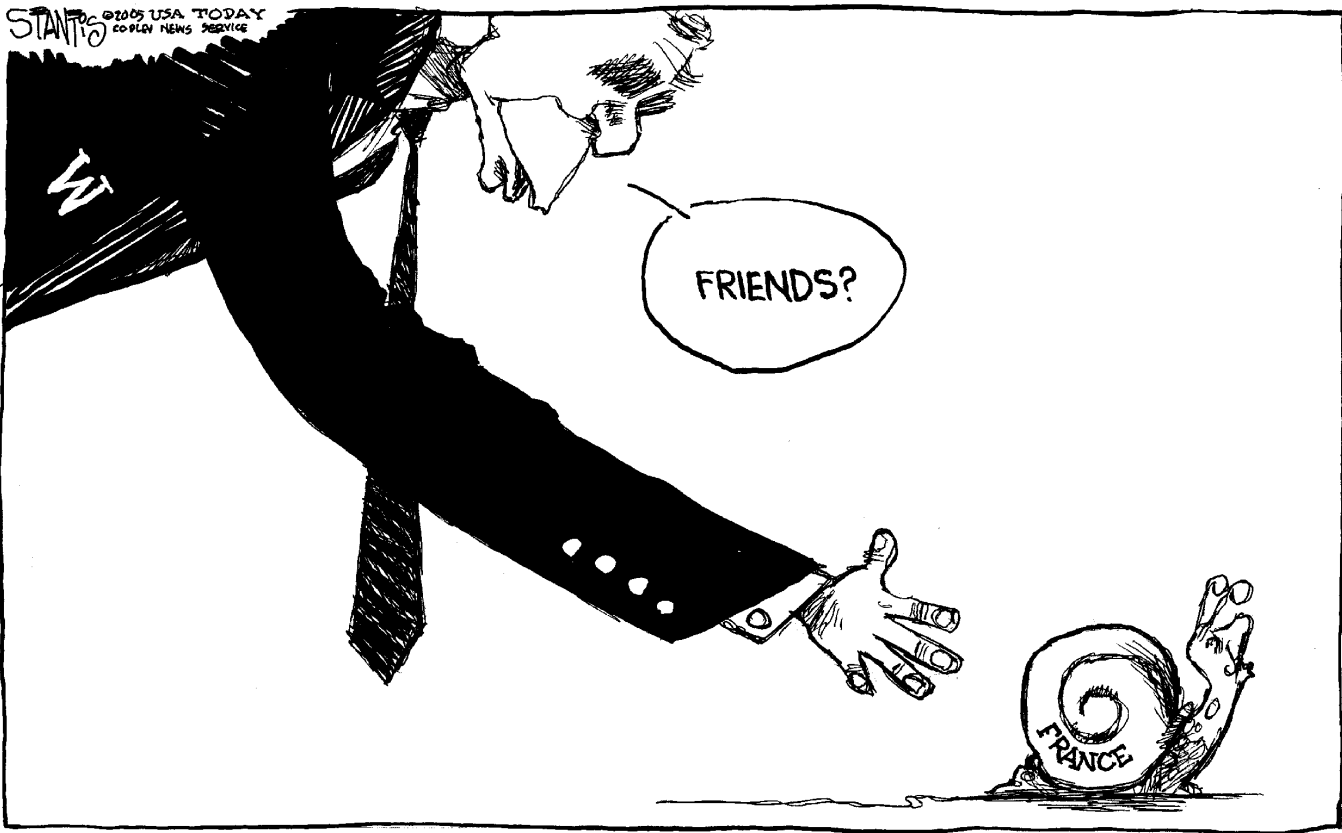
nist movement to figure out what differences separate the genders. The goal of feminism is not to declare that women and men are the same, but to make sure that they are treated in a fair and equal way. Let's not forget that the progress that has been made in promoting women's rights came about because some people were willing to think outside the box. Society, even women, accepted the notion that women were in some ways inferior and should not be allowed the same rights as men. Then a few innovative thinkers said, "What if?" and "What about this?"

Of course, not all novel ideas turn out to be correct. We do not know if what Summers has conjectured is even close to the truth. We do know that there are many innate differences between men and women, and there is a body of evidence that shows that men and women think differently. Therefore, it is not too much of a stretch to think that maybe men might inherently be "better" at math and science than women. However, we, of course, do not know if this is true, and a lot of research could be done to try to figure it out. Summers did not claim that the idea is right; he was just putting it out there.

A lot of women are very offended that anyone could even think that men are better at math and science than women. Like I said, we do not have any idea whether it is true or not. However, even if it is, is it really so terrible? I understand that it is pretty upsetting if you are told that you are not as good as someone else at something. But even if the standard deviations are different between men's abilities and women's abilities, there will still be women who are very good at math and science and men who are not so good.

We must also consider what it means to be good at something. Maybe it could turn out that men are more intelligent in math and science, but women are naturally more hard working or persistent. Who knows? We do know that statistics show that boys score higher than girls on standardized tests, but 60 percent of college students are female, and girls get better grades than boys on average. We also know that boys tend to do better in math and science, but girls tend to be better writers, according to some studies. There are many factors when it comes to success, and one gender might be better at one aspect, and the other gender might be better at another aspect. We won't even know the truth unless someone asks the questions and inspires research.

The goal of feminism is not to declare that women and men are the same, but to make sure that they are treated in a fair and equal way.



ARTS

THEATER REVIEW

‘The Vagina Monologues’ — Matter Reclaimed from The Black Hole

Latest Production Sparkles with Divine Performances, but Sinister Sentiment Rears Its Head

By Monica Byrne

The Vagina Monologues
Little Kresge
February 17–19, 2005

You might call me a vagina veteran. MIT’s latest production of “The Vagina Monologues” was my fourth viewing of the famous play. Every year, I’ve felt touched and inspired by the hurricane of energy involved in bringing the event to fruition, all for the sake of women’s well-being in the world. This year’s production — with one glaring exception — was a resounding affirmation of that mission.

Last year’s MIT production was ebullient and engaging, with 10-250 packed to capacity. This year, the venue was Little Kresge — smaller, but much more sleek. The stage was draped beautifully in strips of pink chiffon with giant panels flanking the stage, each painted with a suggestive “V.” Actresses, appearing alone or in ensembles, had nothing but plain black stools to tell their stories. There were a few weak performances that came across as uninspired recitations, but they were outweighed by the excellence of the others.

Amanda P. Hunter ’07 sizzled in her monologue, “Reclaiming Cunt,” slinking around her stool and exhorting the audience to chant the word “cunt” so loudly that those in Kresge Auditorium above could hear us.

Erica R. Fuchs G performed “Because He Liked To Look At It,” a quiet, heartfelt story about a woman who hated her vagina, and Bob the “vagina connoisseur” who helped her to love it. Erica’s measured delivery, shot through with quiet astonishment, made me feel this woman’s revelation.

SiRui Xia ’07, on the other hand, burst onto the stage in a furor to perform “My Angry Vagina,” slamming her stool for emphasis, bellowing about “wads of fucking cotton” and “cold duck lips” (the metal lever a gynecologist uses to pry open a vagina).

Kathleen G. Connolly ’05, in “The Little Coochie Snorcher That Could,” gave a wonderfully understated performance as an abused southern teenager who was schooled in the arts of self-pleasure by an older, silk-clad woman.

Shuo Zhang ’06, performing “The Vagina Workshop,” had so much delightful energy the stage could barely contain her; she

thrashed about as she recounted discovering her clitoris with a mirror.

And finally, HuiYing Wen ’08 was a standout in the ensemble piece “I was 12, My Mother Slapped Me,” garnering laugh after laugh with her deadpan delivery of lines like “I associated my period with inexplicable phenomena.”

“The Vagina Monologues” always engenders an atmosphere of warmth, openness, and inclusion. The audience is invited to ache, laugh, cringe, and cry with the women’s stories. A sexual and mental health representative from MIT Medical was present as a resource to anyone who needed it during the course of the play. Three “Vagina Warriors” — a professor, a police officer, and a women’s counselor — were named at curtain call, honored for their contributions to women’s well-being in our community.

But one short moment in the play jeopardized this atmosphere. The monologues and ensemble pieces are punctuated by short “Vagina Facts.” In particular, the fact that the clitoris is a bundle of 8,000 nerve endings — twice the number in the penis — is repeated like a mantra throughout the play. This is tiresome enough, because it implies some kind of superiority. As in previous performances, I resigned myself to tolerate it. But in this production, the herald of this “Happy Vagina Fact” went further: “So not only are we prettier, smarter and better than men, [but we have twice the number of nerve endings]!” Many in the audience whooped, cheered, and clapped.

I was appalled. Who sanctioned this? I looked around at the men in the audience, who had come to the performance in trust. I don’t remember ever having heard that line in a previous production. It was not in my own, admittedly outdated, copy of the play. But, given that the Vagina Monologues web site states “V-Day is about inclusion and community, about bringing people together to achieve its goals,” I doubted that it was in the original manuscript. So why did this year’s production include this sexist statement?

Let’s take a step back. Part of feminism involves re-establishing the feminine value system in all spheres of society: affirming that emotionality, openness, and communality are valuable assets to any human person, as are “masculine” values like independence, stoicism, and assertion. But the ideal societal

paradise is one in which we realize that sex is ultimately a meaningless category, just as race is. Every human being would be free to behave according to their unadulterated inner voice, to exhibit a blend of genders that has little or nothing to do with the shape of their sexual organs.

Let’s return to the present. That sex-neutral society is far from our current reality, which still involves systematic violence against biological females. It is our human duty to halt it by whatever means possible. In the context of this year’s production, women may feel particularly defensive at a time when the U.S. government is acting as the World’s Biggest Phallus, poking our business into every country on earth, spreading the seeds of American values. Women may feel particularly defensive in the wake of Larry Summers’ boorish comments on females’ “intrinsic aptitude” in science. Or, women may feel defensive simply because of negative past experiences with men.

All of these feelings are valid. But at that moment in the play, all I could think about was the amazing men I have known — my wonderful father and brother, my dear friends and lovers. Change cannot and should not be accomplished without enlisting men’s aid. Naturally, the question arises: why should men care about feminism? The usual response invokes the welfare of mothers, sisters, daughters, and wives.

But the true answer goes far deeper. The current gender-polarized society denies as much to men as it does to women: men have just as much to gain from change. Society programs girls to be dependent on men for wholeness. Conversely, society programs boys to be dependent on women as their emotional receptacles. Imagine a world where our



TAMAR ENGEL

Shuo Zhang ’06 is relieved to learn that she can’t lose her clitoris in a piece entitled “The Vagina Workshop.”

behavior is only a consequence of our own free choices, rather than the deficiencies society implants in us.

There is no reason to alienate men — and women — with a juvenile cheap shot like the one in this year’s production. Since both the producer and a technician were men, I wonder whether this misanthropic tidbit was a deliberate inclusion or a mere oversight.

American society is slowly dissolving sexual and gender norms — often making mistakes, and sometimes making progress. This year’s “Vagina Monologues,” while marred by a moment of poor discretion, was nevertheless a powerful celebration of the female sex and the human story.

CLASSICAL REVIEW

Finally, an Opera Everyone Will Like

Boston Lyric Opera Presents Heartwarming Rendition of Classic Children’s Tale

By Jacqueline O’Connor

STAFF WRITER

The Little Prince
Boston Lyric Opera
Jeffrey Allison, treble
At the Schubert Theater until Feb. 27, 2005

This review has the potential of turning into a blubbing sob story of lost youth, past innocence, and careful self-reflection. I will spare the details and instead highly recommend that everyone attend the Boston Lyric Opera’s production of “The Little Prince.” This performance was one of the most heartfelt experiences of my concert-going life. Within 15 minutes of the opening, I was in tears, along with half the audience. The combination of beautiful music, talented musicians, and the simple yet deeply moving tale of the Little Prince captivated both children and adults alike for the entirety of the two-hour performance.

“The Little Prince,” a story written by French author Antoine de St. Exupery and brought to life at the Schubert Theatre by

composer Rachel Portman, librettist Nicholas Wright, and designer Maria Bjørnson, tells the tale of a pilot, stranded in the desert after a plane crash, who meets a boy prince from Asteroid B-612 through whom he learns about the important things in life. The Little Prince is on a journey through the universe to learn how to take care of his Rose, the only other living thing on his asteroid. He meets many people along the way and learns much from each of them while at the same time reminding them of the wisdom that children possess.

This story was my favorite as a child, and its moral, while taken for granted in my younger years, hit hard during this performance. Told through the eyes of a child who until the happenings of this story never had any interactions with adults, this story reveals the workings of the adult world in an almost disturbing light. As the Little Prince travels to different planets, he learns more and more about the adult world. On one planet, for example, he meets a businessman who thinks he owns the stars because he has counted

them all. Confused by this man’s greed, the Little Prince wonders how anyone could own the stars by just counting them. In the retelling of his story to the Pilot, the Little Prince shows how adults are too concerned with unimportant things and have forgotten about things that really matter, like friendship and responsibility.

Because of the pertinence this story has to both adults and children alike, the composer worked hard to create an experience that could be accessible everyone. The music was gorgeous and very fitting for the opera, as if taken straight from a storybook. Portman used a mixture of beautiful melodies, sound effects, and wonderful character to produce a sense of wonder in the music. Both singers and orchestra musicians performed excellently.

Two of the best arias in the opera were a duet between the Little Prince and his Rose and a solo by The Vain Man, a sorry character who begs for the admiration of all around him. The duet was very touching and sung with a special gentleness that portrayed the affection that the Little Prince and the Rose

felt for each other very well. The Vain Man’s solo was absolutely hilarious in that half of it was hummed through a kazoo. I usually have a strong aversion to the sound of a kazoo, but when played by an opera singer, it actually sounded quite good. This was just one of the examples in the music where both children and adults could equally appreciate the music.

What impressed me most about this opera was the children who sang in it. The music highlighted a children’s chorus, made up of young singers from around the country, who sang the transitions between scenes. Without even needing to try, these children brought a wonderful life and animation to the stage. Most impressive of all, though, was Jeffrey Allison who sang the part of the Little Prince. Beyond the fact that his stamina and energy were unbelievable for an eleven-year-old, he was a talented musician who brought much feeling to the character of the Little Prince.

I highly recommend a trip to see this opera. The heartwarming story and amazing musical performance are definitely worth seeing.

Heavy metal, opera, and everything in between
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What to Look for at the Worthy ‘Sideways’ Eclipsed by ‘Million Dollar’ Night

By Kapil Amarnath

The Academy generally doesn’t award memorable films, unless it’s extremely obvious. Consider Best Picture winners from recent times like “A Beautiful Mind” and “Chicago.” Both films quickly disappeared from view shortly after their statuette-filled nights. The Academy generally picks from movies that are a) released towards the end of the year, b) pushed hard by a big distributor, or c) serious. This year, movies left out of the fete include “Eternal Sunshine of the Spotless Mind,” which was released in late March. Easily one of the year’s top films, it failed to garner deserving nominations for Best Picture, Director, or Actor. “Spiderman 2” was a great summer blockbuster and a classic superhero movie, but only got nominations in sound and visual effects. Finally, “I Heart Huckabees,” a hilarious, intelligent, well-acted comedy distributed by the small Fox Searchlight simply didn’t have a chance against the Miramax-pushed “Aviator.”

Despite the Academy’s seeming inability to discern the good from the great, there are a couple of reasons to watch this year’s ceremony. First and foremost, Chris Rock is the host and should spice things up for viewers inundated with news on the FCC. Second, when the awards are actually announced, the moment of victory or defeat is often a defining one. An actress winning an Academy Award in front of her peers, on the biggest stage in the industry, often allows us to see real emotion from someone who usually must act it. Still, these moments make up about 20 minutes of the three hour marathon. I would advise keeping the show on in the background or looking up the schedule of awards.

Best Picture

Best Picture winners tend to be critically loved, have a good showing at the box office, and feature stars. Of the nominees, “The Aviator” best exemplifies these trends. Much has been made of director Martin Scorsese’s lack of a Best Director Oscar, but none of his films have won best picture. “The Aviator” is the worst of the nominees, but needless to say, it has won most of the Best Picture awards in ceremonies leading up to the Oscars. “Million Dollar Baby” could push “The Aviator” from the throne, but it’s a character study, confined to smaller ambitions than “The Aviator.” Of the movies, my favorite is “Sideways,” but, despite its quality, it lacks the stars and the epic grandeur of “The Aviator.” “Finding Neverland” simply isn’t ambitious enough to be a Best Picture winner, and “Ray” is held up by Jamie Foxx’s amazing performance and the well-integrated musical performances.

Best Director

Seven out of the last ten years, the director of the Best Picture has won for Best Director. This year, however, despite the sympathy votes for Martin Scorsese, Clint Eastwood will win his second statuette in direction. Eastwood has won virtually every award leading up to the Oscars, and he directs his actors beautifully in “Million Dollar Baby.” Scorsese has made three of the best movies of the last thirty years: “Taxi Driver,” “Raging Bull,” and “Goodfellas,” as well as several other very good movies, such as “The Age of Innocence,” one of the best period pieces I’ve ever seen. He’s now had a total of six nominations, but he will remain at zero wins because “The Aviator” is far from his best film. Alexander Payne directed his actors in “Sideways” just as well as Eastwood did, but his movie simply isn’t as dark. While Taylor Hackford directed Jamie Foxx beautifully, the rest of the movie was uneven.

Best Actor

I’ve already mentioned Jamie Foxx’s name twice, and with good reason. Foxx’s performance is easily one of the best of the past few years. It wasn’t just because of Foxx’s well-known impersonation skills; he embodies Ray Charles and seems to know exactly what Charles’ problems and desires were as a blind genius. The only other candidate that has won any major awards is Leonardo Dicaprio, who won at the Golden Globes in the drama category. Dicaprio had the advantage of being a famous dead person who also had a mental disability, and, while solid, he tends to overact Hughes’ OCD. Clint Eastwood is good in “Baby,” but this nomination must be partly because Clint cries. In a church. Next to a priest. Paul Gia-



TWENTIETH CENTURY FOX

Sandra Oh (left), Thomas Haden Church, Virginia Madsen, and Paul Giamatti play four wine-loving friends in “Sideways.”

matti, who carried “Sideways,” was the biggest snub. Lastly, Johnny Depp was extremely restrained in his role as “Peter Pan” playwright J.M. Barrie, but watch out for him in next year’s Oscars. He stars in “The Libertine” with John Malkovich and Samantha Morton, which soared out of the 2004 Toronto Film Festival with a lot of buzz.

Best Actress

The winners of the Best Actress award the past couple of years have radically changed their appearance. Last year, Charlize Theron went from blonde bombshell to a lumpy prostitute/serial killer in “Monster,” and, in 2002, Nicole Kidman rode her fake nose in “The Hours” to a statuette. This year, Hilary Swank gained 19 lbs. of muscle for her role as a boxer in “Million Dollar Baby.” In addition, Swank portrays intense physical suffering during the film, which plays well with the Academy. She’s won all the major awards leading up to the Oscars. I really loved Kate Winslet’s tangerine colored hair in “Eternal Sunshine,” but her role simply isn’t as dark as Swank’s. Imelda Staunton has gotten rave reviews for her role as abortionist “Vera Drake,” but she just won’t get the same push as Swank or Ben- ing. Annette Bening won a Golden Globe for “Being Julia,” but Swank has built up too much steam.

Best Supporting Actor

The supporting actor and actress categories are often the toughest to predict because the players appear on the screen for less time than the best actor nominees. As a result, the award generally goes to people who have defining scenes when they do appear. Clive Owen had such scenes in “Closer,” where he proved he could be the next James Bond, as did Thomas Haden Church in “Sideways.” But the pick here is Morgan Freeman in “Million Dollar Baby.” Freeman is a three-time Oscar nominee, and he shows a little bit more emotion than we’re used to from him in “Baby.” Foxx won’t win two Oscars, and Alan Alda’s first nomination was a gesture to the legendary TV star from M.A.S.H.

Best Supporting Actress

This was the toughest category to predict. Natalie Portman was very emotionally and physically revealing in “Closer.” Cate Blanchett was one of the few good

things going for “The Aviator” in her portrayal of Audrey Hepburn. Portman beat Blanchett at the Globes, but since then Blanchett hasn’t lost. Portman represents a rising star, while Blanchett is an established A-list star who was nominated for Best Actress in 1998 for her role as Queen Elizabeth. Ultimately, though I liked Portman better, I think Blanchett will win. The Academy will probably feel that Portman will have many more chances at Oscar glory, while Blanchett is long due a statuette, as was Renee Zellweger last year. Virginia Madsen was mesmerizing in scenes in “Sideways” but simply doesn’t



MIRAMAX FILMS

In “Finding Neverland,” Johnny Depp (left) plays J. M. Barrie, the creator of Peter Pan.

| The Tech Predicts The Oscar Winners | | | | | |
|--|----------------------|---------------------------------------|----------------------|-------------|----------------------|
| BEST PICTURE | | ACTRESS IN A SUPPORTING ROLE | | | |
| The Aviator | | Cate Blanchett (The Aviator) | | | |
| Finding Neverland | | Laura Linney (Kinsey) | | | |
| Million Dollar Baby | | Virginia Madsen (Sideways) | | | |
| Ray | | Sophie Okonedo (Hotel Rwanda) | | | |
| Sideways | | Natalie Portman (Closer) | | | |
| Will Win: | Kapil's Picks | Will Win: | Kapil's Picks | Will Win: | Kevin's Picks |
| Should Win: | The Aviator | Should Win: | Cate Blanchett | Should Win: | Cate Blanchett |
| | Sideways | | Natalie Portman | | Virginia Madsen |
| DIRECTING | | ACTOR IN A SUPPORTING ROLE | | | |
| Martin Scorsese (The Aviator) | | Alan Alda (The Aviator) | | | |
| Clint Eastwood (Million Dollar Baby) | | Thomas Haden Church (Sideways) | | | |
| Taylor Hackford (Ray) | | Jamie Foxx (Collateral) | | | |
| Alexander Payne (Sideways) | | Morgan Freeman (Million Dollar Baby) | | | |
| Mike Leigh (Vera Drake) | | Clive Owen (Closer) | | | |
| Will Win: | Kapil's Picks | Will Win: | Kapil's Picks | Will Win: | Kevin's Picks |
| Should Win: | Hilary Swank | Should Win: | Morgan Freeman | Should Win: | Clive Owen |
| | Alexander Payne | | Thomas Haden Church | | Thomas Haden Church |
| ACTRESS IN A LEADING ROLE | | WRITING (ADAPTED SCREENPLAY) | | | |
| Annette Bening (Being Julia) | | Before Sunset | | | |
| Catalina Sandino Moreno (Maria Full Of Grace) | | Finding Neverland | | | |
| Imelda Staunton (Vera Drake) | | Million Dollar Baby | | | |
| Hilary Swank (Million Dollar Baby) | | The Motorcycle Diaries | | | |
| Kate Winslet (Eternal Sunshine Of The Spotless Mind) | | Sideways | | | |
| Will Win: | Kapil's Picks | Will Win: | Kapil's Picks | Will Win: | Kevin's Picks |
| Should Win: | Hilary Swank | Should Win: | Sideways | Should Win: | Finding Neverland |
| | Kate Winslet | | Sideways | | Sideways |
| ACTOR IN A LEADING ROLE | | WRITING (ORIGINAL SCREENPLAY) | | | |
| Don Cheadle (Hotel Rwanda) | | The Aviator | | | |
| Johnny Depp (Finding Neverland) | | Eternal Sunshine Of The Spotless Mind | | | |
| Leonardo Dicaprio (The Aviator) | | Hotel Rwanda | | | |
| Clint Eastwood (Million Dollar Baby) | | The Incredibles | | | |
| Jamie Foxx (Ray) | | Vera Drake | | | |
| Will Win: | Kapil's Picks | Will Win: | Kapil's Picks | Will Win: | Kevin's Picks |
| Should Win: | Jamie Foxx | Should Win: | Eternal Sunshine | Should Win: | Hotel Rwanda |
| | Jamie Foxx | | Eternal Sunshine | | The Incredibles |

See <http://www.oscar.com/> for a full list of nominees.

77th Academy Awards

'Baby' K.O.'s Airsick 'Aviator,' Foxx's Victory Assured

By Kevin Der
ARTS EDITOR

Last year was one of the best Oscar ceremonies that I can remember, because my favorite film swept all 11 awards it was up for. Making correct predictions was easy when "Return of the King" was in the running, but usually it's hard to do well. I still remember Roeper stating with the utmost confidence that Daniel Day-Lewis would win — yet we all remember Adrien Brody passionately kissing Halle Berry during his victory speech.

It was just announced that changes have been made to the way the awards are presented this year. In past years, the nominees remain seated when the winner is named, and the winner then takes the long walk to the stage. In order to save time, it was reasoned, this ceremony will introduce two new ways for award presentations. In the first, all the nominees will go on stage, and the winner will step forward to receive the statue. In the second, the nominees will all sit together in the audience, and the winner will make her acceptance speech without walking on stage.

I condemn this new practice, because it marginalizes the nominees who won't get to go on stage. A motion picture is made up of many ingredients, each of which is essential to its success. Not allocating the same glory to each category is like a slap in the face. Why not cut the half-hour tributes or musical performances? And after all that, it's not clear to me how inviting all five nominees to the stage will save time.

The Academy isn't the best at actually awarding the Oscars, either. There is a limitless trove of terrible blunders even if one only considers the past decade. "Shakespeare in Love" winning over "Saving Private Ryan" is one of the travesties that I take most personally. We could talk about the snubbing of Ian McKellen's Gandalf, or "Titanic" winning. Yet, I've learned to make peace with the fact that the statuette very often ends up in the wrong hands. Instead, I focus on the positive aspects of this ceremony — getting to see movie stars and directors all mingling together, cheering on my favorites, and hopefully screaming with joy when they win.

Best Picture

This category is usually fit for the the classic grade-school question, "Which does not belong?" Two years ago, the answer was "Chicago," for which I had an extreme personal loathing. Any mention of the film made me nauseous (and still does, so writing this pains me), and its victory left my stomach unsettled for weeks. You know the Academy has made a mistake when the Best Picture winner has been completely forgotten mere days after the ceremony. This year's misfit, "The Aviator," induces a much more subtle airsickness, but still leaves the viewer disgusted that it was nominated. Its plot quickly goes awry, there is a complete lack of emotional attachment between its characters and the viewer, and the editing leaves one disconnected montage after another. As usual, it's discouraging that the weakest of the nominees is actually the front-runner.

Among the other four films, "Million Dollar Baby" is the most likely to win and admit-

tedly wields the most emotional knockout punch. Hardly anyone anticipated the power of the film's conclusion, which manages to be sad, but also inspirational, rather than depressing. "Finding Neverland," despite being solid, has no chance except in Peter Pan's world, and "Ray" is more likely to come on stage for acting. "Sideways" yields the biggest laughs, but lacks the emotional pull. Ideally, these four would have been joined by "Closer" or "The Incredibles."

Best Director

Scorsese has been waiting a long time for this award and missed out again two years ago for "Gangs of New York." This could be another case of a consolation award for past work — he deserves it for "Taxi Driver." If Scorsese loses again, Clint Eastwood will undoubtedly take the statue — I don't think he deserved it for "Mystic River," and there was no way Peter Jackson wouldn't win, but this time he did very well.

Best Actor

Last year, it could have gone to either Sean Penn or Bill Murray, and I felt Murray was robbed for his fantastic performance in "Lost in Translation." This time around, there's no doubt who will win, and that is Jamie Foxx. His outstanding portrayal Ray Charles is responsible for every bit of the film's success. The other four nominees are strong, but there is simply no question that Foxx will win. Like many, I'm disappointed that Paul Giamatti isn't nominated for "Sideways," but he also would stand no chance.

Best Actress

Hilary Swank will win. Annette Bening will lose. Again. And that's all I have to say.

Best Supporting Actor

This category is the most unknown at this point. The only certainty is that Jamie Foxx won't win for "Collateral," since he's got the Actor statue in the bag. Aside from Foxx, the other four have a good chance. I'd like to see Thomas Haden Church win, just because I liked "Sideways" so much. Clive Owen will probably win, though — his character in "Closer" has enormous emotional complexity, from silent rage to sexual desperation to calm sadism. I didn't care for Morgan Freeman's performance; his voiceovers reminded me too much of "The Shawshank Redemption."

Best Supporting Actress

Virginia Madsen is by far my favorite — she's adorable in "Sideways." I hadn't recog-



UNIVERSAL PICTURES

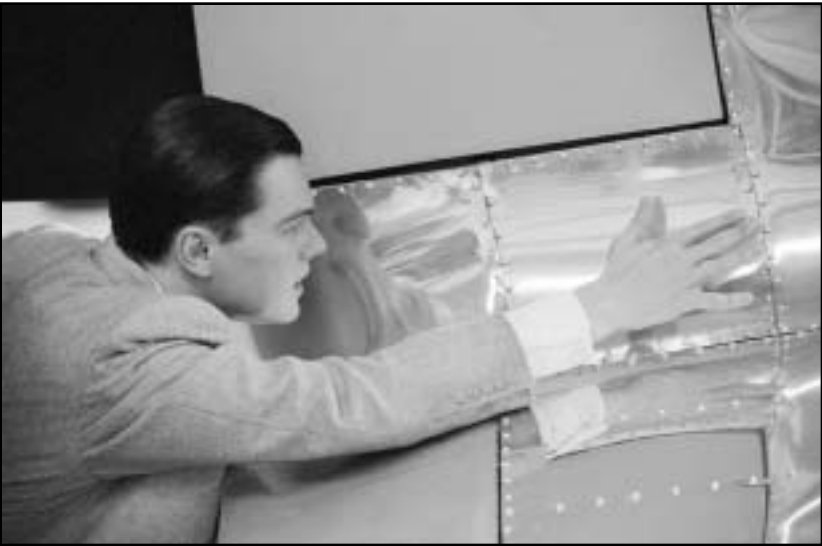
Jamie Foxx will win the Best Actor award for his portrayal of Ray Charles (above) and is also nominated in the Best Supporting Actor category for his role in "Collateral."

nized her from past work and thought she was in her late twenties, so I was surprised to learn that she's actually around 40. Her musings about why she loves wine carry the same delicate wonder as Chris Cooper's descriptions of the ghost orchid in "Adaptation." Having shed Galadriel, Cate Blanchett does very well as Katherine Hepburn, though, and will probably win. Then again, Natalie Portman's emotionally troubled stripper from "Closer" has a chance too. It's too bad, because I liked her a

my and has never won. My favorite of his is last year's "Peter Pan," and his Shyamalan collaborations on "Signs" and "The Sixth Sense" are some of his best work, all of which were snubbed. Though his score for "The Village" is seemingly too rustic and emotionally withdrawn, it is well married with the film, and taken in that context, is very beautiful. If Williams doesn't win, I hope it goes to Howard.

Jan Kaczmarek's "Finding Neverland" has

some beautiful cues as well, utilizing solo piano improvisations to good effect. Its waltzes are particularly memorable, especially the beautiful cue Dancing with the Bear. Its weakness is seemingly amateurish orchestration. Lastly, Debney's "Passion of the Christ" is this category's misfit — its repetitive choir and uninspiring cues make it a lackluster contender, but to the fear of many, may be this film's consolation prize. In an ideal world, Gabriel Yared's rejected score for "Troy" and Michael Giacchino's "The Incredibles" would also be nominated, replacing "Lemony Snicket" and "Passion."



MIRAMAX FILMS

Leonardo di Caprio stars as Howard Hughes in "The Aviator," the overrated front-runner for Best Picture.

lot more in "Garden State" — there she was lovable, not a withdrawn and miserable waif.

Best Musical Score

As a lover of film music, this is an award near and dear to my heart. I'm an enormous John Williams fan, and I'll be screaming for him to win this Sunday. His score for "Harry Potter and the Prisoner of Azkaban" is nearly a complete departure from his previous two scores for the franchise, as he maintains just hints of prior themes while creating entirely new material for dementors, Buckbeak the hippogriff, and others. Though Buckbeak's Theme isn't the glorious masterpiece that the tear-inducing Fawkes' Theme was from "Chamber of Secrets," it deserves to be mentioned in the same breath as Williams' other best flying themes. I could continue to praise the rest of this score for pages more.

The other nominees in this category are weaker. Thomas Newman has done some beautiful work, such as the shockingly gorgeous Egg Theme from last year's nomination "Finding Nemo." Unfortunately, it's generally acknowledged that "Lemony Snicket" isn't his best work. Similarly, James Newton Howard has had outstanding scores passed over by the Acade-



WARNER BROS. PICTURES

Clint Eastwood starred in and directed "Million Dollar Baby," in which Hilary Swank plays a rising boxing talent.

Best Animated Feature

Pixar will win this award for the second year in a row for "The Incredibles," and "The Polar Express" should replace "Shrek Tale" as a nominee. I didn't like "Shrek 2" very much, because it was stale and much of its material is parodic, which I think makes animated films weak. This category, created just three years ago, seems to have nominees that are there just to fill the minimum three slots. Usually, though, the correct film wins. Last year, "Brother Bear" had no business being nominated, but that was a moot point, since it was competing against Pixar's masterful "Finding Nemo." The year before that, "Spirited Away" rightly took the gold against a relatively weak field, with no films from either Pixar or Dreamworks.

Best Writing (Adapted Screenplay)

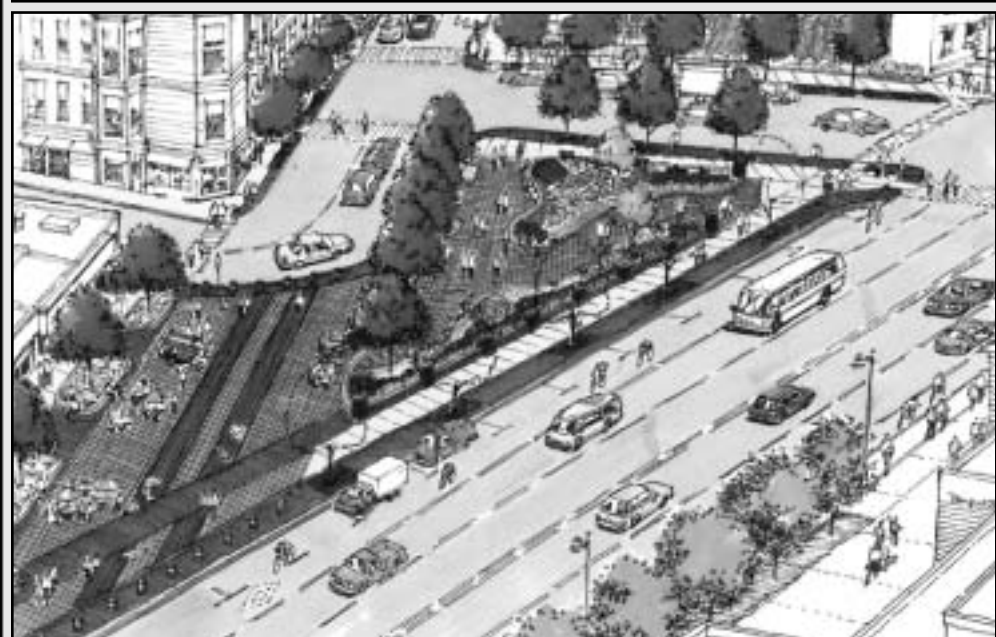
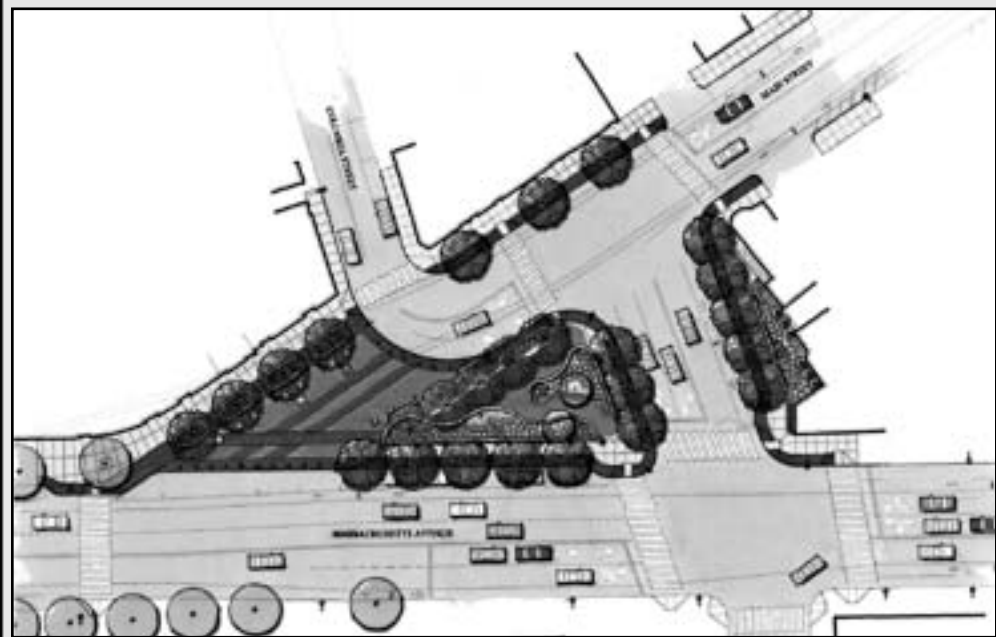
The humor of "Sideways" is unmatched, and its characters deliver the most inspirational soliloquies that express not only the beauty of wine, but also how wonderful and tragic love can be. Historically, this award is usually a consolation prize, so it is equally likely to go to "Finding Neverland," which is otherwise shut out.

Best Writing (Original Screenplay)

Charlie Kaufman's "Eternal Sunshine of the Spotless Mind" is well-written but unlikely to win because it's a weaker script than both "Adaptation" and "Being John Malkovich." "Hotel Rwanda" has the best chance, but I'd love to see "The Incredibles" take this home, since Pixar has never won a writing Oscar.

The Oscars will air on Sunday, Feb. 27, 2005, 8 p.m., on ABC.

Mass. Ave. Renovation Plans Raise Safety Concerns



The layout of the redesigned Lafayette Square intersection of Massachusetts Avenue, Main Street, and Columbia Street. The new design reduces the directions of traffic flow. (bottom) An artist's rendering of how the plaza will appear after construction.

Construction, from Page 1

2006, with possible finishing work in the spring of 2007. Work will take place in pieces, with traffic restricted to one lane each way in the affected areas. Other improvements include new traffic signals at the Mass. Ave. and Lansdowne Street intersection, as well as the replacement of lighting with historic 1907 reproduction fixtures, new trees, the addition of bicycle lanes, and a landscaped plaza at the intersection of Main Street and Mass. Ave.

Some concerned about safety

A number of people attending the community forum requested action be taken to provide bicyclists an alternative to passing stopped buses on the left, and also to slow down cars near the 77 Mass. Ave. crosswalk. O. Robert Simha MCP '57, former MIT Director of Planning, said during the forum that Cambridge had consistently opposed a plan put forward by MIT that he said would give greater safety to bicyclists by putting them on a raised pathway similar to that of Vassar Street. The "city staff stonewalled us," he said, and ignored MIT's objections at each stage of the planning review. "It's worth screaming" about the plan now, he said, "because they're not going to pick up the pieces." "When I led the Planning Office, five or six years ago, MIT objected to this design [and] presented an alternative that was safer for pedestrians and cyclists," he wrote in an e-mail yesterday to President Susan Hockfield and Chief Facilities Officer William J. Anderson, Jr., among others. Instead, "the city opted for what they described as a city-wide bike path scheme... This system has killed several people in the city as they were 'doored' by drivers exiting their cars," he wrote, with two deaths occurring on Mass. Ave. near MIT.

Another community member voiced worries that without the parked cars on the west side of the street, many drivers would accelerate to unsafe speeds when approaching the Harvard Bridge. One solution proposed is to create a raised

crosswalk at 77 Mass. Ave., and Simha disputed Cambridge officials' assertion that a Massachusetts Highway Department regulation would forbid a raised crosswalk at this location because Mass. Ave. is a major artery. Cambridge Project Manager Bill Deignan responded that the bike path is a "standard facility" used by many cities nationwide, and that a survey of bikers found a preference for the proposed location of the bike path, although it was not clear whether the survey offered MIT's plan as an alternative. In addition, he said that the new bike paths would be an improvement over the current state, in which there is none. Of the current bike paths on Vassar St., Anderson said that "the City of Cambridge allowed us to do that... as sort of an experiment," and asked for a report on the outcome. "That was a stretch for them to change" from their standard, he said. Anderson also said that because he had only recently become chief facilities officer at MIT, he was not present during MIT's talks with Cambridge over the past years but was planning further research on the matter and MIT's position. "I know with these bicycle issues that there isn't a definitive solution," he said.

Project will improve streetscape

"The streets and sidewalks out here are in very poor repair," Deignan said during the forum, and the construction ahead is aimed at solving many longstanding problems. As a result of resurfacing both the streets and sidewalks, Mass. Ave. will gain curb extensions at crosswalks to increase visibility and shorten crossing distances. The changes will also take better advantage of the drainage system now in place, which was built with this project in mind and hence was not well suited to the current setup. Lafayette Square, at the intersection of Main, Columbia and Mass. Ave., will also see a significant reconstruction. The unused land formerly occupied by a gas station will route both Columbia and Main into a single intersection where the gas station is currently located. The current intersection and its medians will become a small public plaza. To try to compensate for the lost parking spaces, Deignan said that Cambridge is planning to add about 60 metered spots along side streets near Mass. Ave. Finally, as the construction regions occupy different areas of Mass. Ave., the locations of bus stops may change temporarily, and the 77 Mass. Ave. intersection may have to be rerouted at times.

Candidates for Undergraduate Association Class Council Offices

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The official campaigning period for candidates running for UA offices begins today. A presidential/vice presidential debate will take place Monday, and a Class Council Presidents' debate will take place on Mar. 2. Electronic voting begins on Mar. 3.

Source: Tiffany L. Seto '06, UA Election Commissioner



The British Council and UK Science & Technology present:

A Lecture Series
**From Outer Space to Inner Mind:
Aliens, Consciousness, and Psychocivilization**
UK Scientists Probe the Mysteries of the Universe and the Human Psyche



March 1
6:00 p.m.
MIT
Stata Center, Room 32-123

Susan Blackmore
Freelance writer, lecturer and broadcaster, best known for her book *The Meme Machine*
Are You Sure You're Conscious Now?*

***Learn How to Study or Research Science in the UK**
Following the lecture join us for our discussion on Study and Scholarships in Science in the UK. Hear how you can apply and finance programs to continue your education in Britain and find out more about the Marshall Scholarship program from a Marshall Scholar.

Reception to Follow with Food, Books, Prizes and More!

Lecture Series also includes:

Steven Rose: Can the Brain Explain the Mind? on March 15 at 6:00 p.m. at MIT, Green Building, Room 54-100

For more information on British science, please visit www.uksciencetech.com and www.britishcouncil.org/usa-science



After a brief hiatus, the MIT campus is again hit by snowfall on Thursday night.

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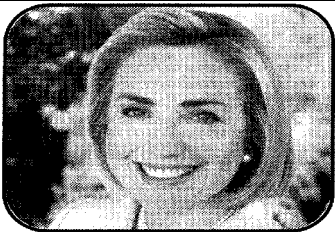


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Study Ranks Schools On Postdoc Program

By Kelley Rivoire

NEWS EDITOR

The magazine *The Scientist* ranked MIT thirteenth among all U.S. institutions in a survey of the best places for postdoctoral fellows to work, based on the responses of 13 non-tenured life scientists from the Institute. The survey results appeared in the Feb. 14 issue of the magazine.

The survey, which also ranked MIT third among U.S. academic institutions, collected data by sending e-mail invitations to readers of the magazine and registrants to the journal's Web site. In total, 3,533 useable responses from non-tenured scientists from 929 American and international institutions were received. Rankings were generated for the 123 U.S. and 66 international institutions from which five or more responses were received.

MIT ranked thirteenth

The 13 respondents from MIT rated the Institute high in quality of training, quality of facilities, and networking opportunities provided.

Specific areas receiving high marks include providing access to the books and journals necessary for research, organizing high-quality talks and seminars, and not discriminating based on gender, country of origin, and religion.

Areas in which MIT was ranked at or below the fiftieth percentile relative to other institutions include quality of communication, providing adequate compensation to cover expenses, and the quality of relationship with the principal investigator.

EPA receives highest ranking

The Environmental Protection Agency received the highest overall ranking for American institutions,

based on surveys collected from a total of five respondents at the EPA, which was the minimum possible for the EPA to be included in the rankings.

Also ranking in the top five are the Fred Hutchinson Cancer Research Center, the National Cancer Institute, the National Institute of Environment Health Sciences, and the Trudeau Institute. The number of responses received from the top five U.S. institutions ranged from 5 to 80.

The University of North Carolina Chapel Hill ranked highest for U.S. academic institutions, with Washington University in St. Louis second, MIT third, Michigan State University fourth, and the Medical College of Wisconsin fifth. The number of responses for these top five ranked U.S. institutions ranged from five to 29.

The 46 criteria used in ranking the institutions comprise 11 major topics including quality of training, quality of mentoring, quality of community, funding, equity, and family and personal life.

The factors ranked as most important to the respondents were training and experience for future career, access to books and journals, access to equipment and supplies, and mentoring from the principal investigator.

A description of the methodology used to produce the rankings warns that bias may have been introduced into the survey, as some samples sizes were very small and the sample of respondents was self selected.

In addition, "no attempt has been made to measure the statistical significance of the results," so a difference in rankings "may be insignificant," according to the description of the methodology.

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At Faculty Meeting, Summers Makes Vow To Improve Behavior

By Sara Rimer
and Patrick D. Healy
THE NEW YORK TIMES

CAMBRIDGE, MASS.

With his faculty threatening open revolt, the president of Harvard, Lawrence H. Summers '75, promised Tuesday that he would temper his management style and begin treating people more respectfully.

Professors, gathered at an overflow meeting of the Faculty of Arts and Sciences to hear and discuss Summers, appeared so dissatisfied with the state of his leadership that they rejected a proposal to have three senior Harvard scholars mediate the furor between the faculty and its president.

After five weeks of mea culpas for his remarks about women in the sciences, Summers issued yet another apology. He promised professors that they would no longer experience the intimidation, anger, and hurt feelings that many of them have reported in his three-and-a-half-year tenure.

"I am committed to opening a new chapter in my work with you," he told some 500 faculty and staff members, according to a copy of his remarks. "To start, I pledge to you that I will seek to listen more and more carefully and to temper my words and actions in ways that convey respect and help us work together more harmoniously."

"No doubt I will not always get things right. But I am determined to set a different tone."

He also promised to pay greater respect to the powers of the faculty on matters like undergraduate education, which he has sought to re-shape.

But the deep concern among professors at the Faculty of Arts and Sciences over his management appeared likely to continue, at least in private. Some critics said after the meeting that Summers was so damaged that his chance of being a great Harvard president was over. Others praised him as trying to reach out.

Although professors did not hold a vote of no confidence at Tuesday's meeting, as some had threatened, a university dean promised to hold a series of private, informal meetings between Summers and professors in the coming weeks. However, several professors expressed skepticism about whether that intervention would do any good. The next full faculty meeting, where the confrontations with Summers have taken place this month, is scheduled

for Mar. 15.

"He is the president; we need to work with that," said Cynthia Friend, chairwoman of chemistry and chemical biology.

"We need to find a new way of working together," she added.

Tuesday's faculty meeting was convened explicitly for professors to stand in judgment of Summers, for and against, and was the latest stormy episode in the serial drama of the Summers presidency. The depth and intensity of faculty anger was shown in a Harvard Crimson poll published Tuesday in which 52 percent of professors disapproved of Summers' leadership and 40 percent approved. In an effort to heal the breach between Summers and the faculty, a former dean of the Faculty of Arts and Sciences proposed a three-member mediation team that would act as a line of communication from the faculty to the president and to Harvard's two governing boards.

Two professors rejected the idea as undemocratic and seemingly prearranged. The former dean, Jeremy Knowles, withdrew the proposal.

"I think an important opportunity was lost for the faculty of arts and sciences to gain some leverage to change its relationship with the president," said Theda Skocpol, a government professor who was to have been on the mediation team.

Most of the faculty speeches at Tuesday's meeting ranged from mildly critical to highly critical of Summers, but some supporters spoke in his favor.

Caroline Hoxby, an economics professor, opened her remarks by saying that the discussion was not about "right versus left" or political correctness, but about management. Some commentators have put a political spin on the debate over remarks by Summers that women may lag in science and engineering because of "intrinsic aptitude."

"Every time, Mr. President, you show a lack of respect for a faculty member's intellectual expertise, you break ties in our web," Hoxby said to Summers, according to a copy of her remarks. "Every time you humiliate or silence a faculty member, you break ties in our web."

Leaving the meeting, James Kloppenberg, a history professor, said he felt reassured. Professor Kloppenberg said of Summers, "He realizes he can't govern the university without the support of the faculty."

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Reservations and information: mitdance@gmail.com



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Tuesday, March 1
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GSC Presents Ideas on Advising

GSC, from Page 1

student satisfaction started very high with new students, it declined each year afterwards.

The survey, which was sponsored by the Provost's Office, the Graduate Student Office, and the GSC, included questions posed by members of the GSC about students' experiences with advising.

About 3,000 students, or almost half of the graduate student population, responded, said Krishnan Sriram G, chair of the GSC subcommittee on Better Advising and Research Ethics.

The focus groups consisted of about 15 faculty members, 25 administrators, and 45 graduate students representing 25 departments. Topics discussed were finding and changing advisors, work expectations, students in transition, mentoring at MIT, conflict resolution, funding, ethical issues, and career advising.

This presentation was meant to kick-start several months of the GSC communicating their findings to the MIT community, Sriram said. Members of the GSC plan to present their findings at the school and department levels, and the GSC plans to release a document summa-

rizing their recommendations by the spring. So far, "everyone has been very receptive and very encouraging," Sriram said.

GSC suggests improvements

"Part of the GSC's mission is to prevent" negative relationships between graduate students and their advisors, said Barun Singh G, president of the GSC.

Personal guidance and feedback were listed as the top two traits that graduate students wanted to see more of in their advisors, according to analysis done by Brenden P. Epps G on the survey. Thirty-three percent of the survey respondents said that they did not meet with their advisor enough.

Another recommendation made was to publicize resources that are available to graduate students, such as the Graduate Student's Office, the Ombudsperson's Office, and counseling and support services. According to the survey, only 5 to 15 percent of graduate students occasionally or frequently use these resources.

Singh said that adding counseling and ombuds services on the department level might increase their use. "Students prefer to use resources that are more localized,"

Singh said.

The satisfaction rate for students in their first or second year of graduate school is about 90 percent, and this number declines about 10 percent for every two years that a student remains, said Sriram.

Faculty's needs addressed

In response to a question asked by a member of the audience regarding the satisfaction of faculty with their students, Sriram said that the faculty have been asked for input during the process and will continue to be asked.

"I'm not sure we're going to do a faculty survey any time soon, but it's certainly something we will consider," Dean for Graduate Students Isaac M. Colbert said.

In addition, faculty need to know the resources available to them to help students struggling with personal issues. We will "try to set up resources for everyone," Colbert said.

Colbert praised the GSC for their work so far in addressing graduate advising. "We in the administration have great confidence that the students can be part of the solution," he said. "Ten years ago, this could not have happened."



Alexander S. del Nido '06 solos with the Chorallaries during a rehearsal Thursday night. The Chorallaries will hold the nth annual Concert in Bad Taste this Saturday at 10:59:59 in 10-250.

Call for Nominations! 2005 Student Art Awards

LAYA and JEROME B. WIESNER
STUDENT ART AWARDS

The Laya and Jerome B. Wiesner Student Art Awards are presented annually to up to three students (undergraduate or graduate), living groups, organizations or activities for outstanding achievement in and contributions to the arts at MIT. Established in 1979, these awards honor President Emeritus Wiesner and Mrs. Wiesner for their commitment to the arts at MIT. An endowment fund provides a \$1,250 honorarium to each recipient.

<http://web.mit.edu/arts/about/awards/wiesner.html>

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<http://web.mit.edu/arts/about/awards/sudler.html>

Please send nominating letters by Friday March 18, 2005 to:
Susan Cohen, Director, Council for the Arts at MIT- E15-205
cohen@media.mit.edu

Solution to KRT Crossword

from page 8

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Smile! :-)

Funk, Jazz, and Joya in Song



The “Joya in Concert” show was held last Thursday evening in Kresge Little Theatre. The concert closed with an encore performance featuring lead vocalist Joanna Y. Abbott’s Artists Behind the Desk rhythm and blues group.

(left) Joanna “Joya” Y. Abbott provides the lead vocals.

(below) Louis Andre Castillo O’choa fingers the bass guitar.

Photography by Omari Stephens



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| 4:00-5:00 PM | 4:00-5:00 PM |
| 6-120 | E51-325 |

Questions? Email ugprogram@sloan.mit.edu.

Many Dancers Place At BU’s Competition

Dance, from Page 20

’00 and Carrie L. Sougnez in second, Ty Harris and Katya Lesnaia PhD ’04 in third, Chris Douglas G and Sally Myers in fourth, Tuan Phan and Si Hui Tan G in fifth, and Dejan Mirceviski and Danielle Brown in sixth.

MIT made an especially impressive showing in Smooth, sweeping first place in all three of the syllabus levels and taking second in Newcomer and Open. The couples

included Mota and Poukchanski in Newcomer American Foxtrot, Meislin and Shevnyuk in Bronze American Waltz/Tango, Victor Tu and Jessica A. Lee ’05 in Silver Waltz/Tango and Foxtrot, and Brad Morrison and Margaret Wong SB ’02, who competed in both the Gold and Open levels of the Smooth four-dance.

Many more MIT dancers placed last Saturday than are mentioned here; full results can be found online at <http://ballroom.mit.edu>.

Swimming and Diving Have Bright Prospects

Swimming, from Page 20

scored points by finishing third, eighth, thirteenth, and fourteenth, respectively. Thornton, Chambers, and Sorensen also scored points in the 200 breast, finishing third, fourth, and twelfth, respectively.

In the 100 back, MIT had four individuals score points, with Edwards, Erin M. Zoller ’05, Laura B. Shimmin ’05, and Rebecca E. Jimenez ’07 finishing second, fifth, seventh, and tenth. All four joined Katrina M. Cornell ’06 and Lindsey R. Sheehan ’07 in the top 16 of the

200 back for what was the most fruitful event for the Beavers in terms of points scored.

With only four athletes from this year’s championship squad — Jennifer J. DeBoer ’05, Ashley R. Rothenberg ’05, Shimmin, and Zoller — graduating, next year’s prospects for besting Springfield at the championships are bright. Particularly, with Holbrook joining the team this year, the Beavers will be able to move up, rather than down, in the standings once points from diving are added into the team scores.

| NEWMAC Women's Championships Results for MIT Team Members | | | |
|---|---------------|---|----------|
| Team Scores | | | |
| Place | Team | Score | |
| 1 | Springfield | 972 | |
| 2 | MIT | 625.5 | |
| 3 | Wellesley | 553.5 | |
| 4 | Wheaton | 417.5 | |
| 5 | Babson | 303 | |
| 6 | Coast Guard | 284 | |
| 7 | Mount Holyoke | 263 | |
| 8 | Smith | 247 | |
| 9 | WPI | 122.5 | |
| 10 | Clark | 86 | |
| Event Results | | | |
| Event | Place | MIT | Result |
| 200 Free Relay | 3 | MIT-A (Julianna K. Edwards '08, Stephanie A. Sidelko '07 Katherine C. Thornton '07, Erin M. Zoller '05) | 1:40.50 |
| | 12 | MIT-B (Jennifer J. DeBoer '05, Jacquelyn M. Nowicke '08 Laura B. Shimmin '05, Sasha B. Brophy '08) | 1:42.92 |
| 500 Free | 5 | Brophy | 5:13.89 |
| | 7 | DeBoer | 5:23.65 |
| | 12 | Katrina M. Cornell '06 | 5:32.02 |
| | 16 | Nowicke | 5:38.71 |
| 200 IM | 6 | Zoller | 2:17.11 |
| | 16 | Annika S. Larsson '08 | 2:23.74 |
| 50 Free | 10 | Sidelko | 25.92 |
| 1-Meter Diving | 1 | Doria M. Holbrook '08 | 418.05 |
| 400 Medley Relay | 2 | MIT-A (Edwards, Thornton, Larsson, Brophy) | 4:05.53 |
| | 12 | MIT-B (Zoller, Moria C. Chambers '06 Jessica A. Harpole '07, DeBoer) | 4:16.46 |
| 200 Medley Relay | 2 | MIT-A (Edwards, Thornton, Larsson, Zoller) | 1:52.97 |
| | 11 | MIT-B (Shimmin, Chambers, Sidelko, Nowicke) | 1:56.18 |
| 400 IM | 2 | Thornton | 4:47.94 |
| 100 Fly | 1 | Edwards | 59.99 |
| | 6 | Larsson | 1:02.35 |
| 200 Free | 1 | Brophy | 1:57.20 |
| | 7 | DeBoer | 2:00.28 |
| | 13 | Nowicke | 2:03.71 |
| | 15 | Cornell | 2:04.92 |
| 100 Breast | 3 | Thornton | 1:10.26 |
| | 8 | Chambers | 1:12.79 |
| | 13 | Sorensen | 1:14.86 |
| | 14 | Lin | 1:15.35 |
| 100 Back | 2 | Edwards | 1:00.71 |
| | 5 | Zoller | 1:02.93 |
| | 7 | Shimmin | 1:04.55 |
| | 10 | Rebecca E. Jimenez '07 | 1:05.23 |
| 800 Free Relay | 2 | MIT-A (DeBoer, Brophy, Thornton, Edwards) | 7:56.66 |
| | 12 | MIT-B (Nowicke, Jimenez Lindsay R. Sheehan '07, Cornell) | 8:23.76 |
| 1650 Free | 11 | Sheehan | 19:16.84 |
| 200 Back | 2 | Edwards | 2:09.22 |
| | 5 | Zoller | 2:15.07 |
| | 8 | Jimenez | 2:21.31 |
| | 10 | Cornell | 2:18.69 |
| | 14 | Shimmin | 2:22.13 |
| | 16 | Sheehan | 2:25.51 |
| 100 Free | 5 | Brophy | 54.91 |
| | 7 | DeBoer | 55.06 |
| | 14 | Nowicke | 56.77 |
| 200 Breast | 3 | Thornton | 2:32.80 |
| | 4 | Chambers | 2:35.59 |
| | 12 | Sorensen | 2:40.60 |
| 200 Fly | 8 | Larsson | 2:23.63 |
| 3-Meter Diving | 1 | Holbrook | 455.10 |
| 400 Free Relay | 2 | MIT-A (DeBoer, Zoller, Nowicke, Brophy) | 3:41.05 |
| | 11 | MIT-B (Cornell, Jimenez, Shimmin, Sidelko) | 3:49.92 |

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How do I make an appointment at the MIT Mental Health Service?

If you wish to make an appointment at MIT Medical’s Mental Health Service, call x3-2916. The receptionist will schedule you for an intake phone call. This is an approximately 15-minute phone call during which an intake clinician will establish the general problem and its urgency, as well as gather information that will help match you with the clinician who will be the most helpful to you. The clinician will then schedule you for an initial hour-long appointment.

If you don't have the privacy for a phone call, you can choose to come to the Mental Health Service (3rd floor of MIT Medical, building E23) for your intake interview.

If you cannot wait, there are walk-in hours every afternoon, Monday–Friday from 2 p.m. to 4 p.m. If you come during walk-in hours, you will be seen, although there may be a wait. Appropriate follow-up will be arranged at that walk-in visit. This can include being booked for an intake appointment.

What should I expect at my first visit?

During the first visit, you will talk with a clinician about the concerns that prompted you to make the appointment. The clinician will also take a history, which will involve asking some questions about your family, childhood, and substance use. Usually the session will end with some feedback and suggestions about the best treatment. Sometimes a recommendation is made for treatment outside of the medical center; sometimes a recommendation is made to consider medication.

Does it cost anything to use the Mental Health Service at MIT Medical?

For graduate and undergraduate students there is no charge for visits to the Mental Health Service at MIT Medical.

This is the third in a series of mental health FAQs developed by the Student Health Advisory Committee (SHAC) with input from MIT Medical’s Mental Health Service (MHS). More questions and answers on mental health issues are available online.

Go to <http://web.mit.edu/medical> to find answers to the following questions

- Who should use mental health services?
- Is everything in a mental health visit really 100% confidential?
- Does MHS prescribe medications?
- What if I want to see a clinician outside MIT?
- How are mental health services covered if I am on my parents' insurance?
- How are mental health services covered if I have the MIT Student Extended Insurance Plan?

To learn more about SHAC membership, look out for our Wellness Seminars/Study Breaks around campus, or visit our website <http://web.mit.edu/shac/>.

SPORTS

Women’s Swimming and Diving
Take Second at Championships

By Victoria K. Anderson
TEAM ALUMNA

The MIT Women’s Swimming and Diving team held their seemingly perennial second-place spot at the New England Women’s and Men’s Athletic Conference (NEWMAC) championships, held Feb. 18–20 at Wellesley College. Springfield College won its fifth straight championship title, while host Wellesley trailed the Beavers most of the meet and finished third.

Highlighting the action for MIT was double-winner Doria M. Hol-

brook ’08, who broke the team’s dry spell in the diving events as she topped the rest of the conference on the one-meter and three-meter boards. In doing so, she scored better than several competitors from Division III diving powerhouse Springfield, which bodes well for her hopes at the Division III National Championships March 10–12.

A pair of rookie swimmers boasted individual victories at the meet, with Julianna K. Edwards ’08 touching the wall first in the 100-yard fly and Sasha B. Brophy ’08 securing a win in the 200 free. Edwards also gave a stellar performance in her 100 back leading off

the 400 medley relay, as her time of 59.74 not only broke the Institute record in that event (old record: Kirstin Alberi ’03, 59.89, 2002), but also bettered the provisional qualifying time for the NCAA Division III National Championships.

While the victories were sparse for MIT at the championships, the team utilized its depth, particularly in the back and breast events, to post enough points for their second-place finish. In the 100 breast, Katherine C. Thornton ’07, Moria C. Chambers ’06, Katrina M. Sorenson ’08, and Jolinta Y. Lin ’06 all

Swimming, Page 19

UPCOMING HOME EVENTS

Friday, February 25
NEWMAC Men’s Swimming and Diving Championship Trials and Finals
Zesiger Center Pool, 11 a.m. and 6:30 p.m., respectively
Varsity Women’s Ice Hockey Invitational
Johnson Ice Rink, 7 p.m.

Saturday, February 26
Varsity Women’s Ice Hockey Invitational
Johnson Ice Rink, 9 a.m.
NEWMAC Men’s Swimming and Diving Championship Trials and Finals
Zesiger Center Pool, 11 a.m. and 6:30 p.m., respectively
Varsity Women’s Gymnastics vs. Springfield College
duPont Gymnasium, 4 p.m.

Sunday, February 27
NEWMAC Men’s Swimming and Diving Championship Trials and Finals
Zesiger Center Pool, 11 a.m. and 6:30 p.m., respectively

Steroids a Bigger Problem in High
Schools than in Professional Sports

By Brian Chase
SPORTS EDITOR

On Tuesday, Barry Bonds held his first press conference since the leakage of his testimony that **Column** revealed he had unwittingly used steroids. The press swarmed over him like mosquitoes over a dead dog in a swamp. Barry never admitted or apologized for anything, and the press bashed him for it. Now that steroids has become the major topic in professional sports, Barry has to deal with this kind of press attention all the time.

But to me, the real problems with steroids are not under the bright lights of professional sports, but in high schools across the country where, especially in football, teenagers are shooting up their bodies for the chance to get into powerhouse football programs. An imbedded culture of steroids in high school sports will do far more damage to far more people than any professional use of steroids. And that culture is already established.

At least it is in Texas, as pointed out by the Dallas Morning News’ special report on the use of steroids in Texas high schools. Kevin Blackstone, a columnist for the paper, calls high school steroid use “just

about a full blown epidemic.” The findings of the special investigation are that high school students easily get steroids from acquaintances and friends, or they buy them online. The worst blow came just recently, when nine football players from a Texas school district admitted to using steroids purchased from a local dealer. The nine students then named players from nearby Carroll High School as buyers from the same dealer. Why does this matter? Because Carroll went undefeated in its last season and was ranked the best prep football team in the country.

The ironic thing is, a month prior to this story leaking, the coach of Carroll, Todd Dodge, won the Adams USA Head Coach of the Year Award, given to “the top prep football coach in the country that has not only won on the field, but also rewards the coach deemed to be the best in the country in leading his team as a positive influence to the youth of America,” according to <http://www.NFLHS.com>. Dodge runs a perennial powerhouse that gets “national team of the week honors” regularly. Of course, these new allegations throw doubt on everything that Dodge has accomplished.

Admittedly, Texas is more

obsessed with high school football than any other place in the country. If anyone needs more proof that the football culture in Texas breeds steroid use, I’d like to hear why. But is it such a stretch to assume that if teens in Texas can easily get steroids, then kids in California or Florida or Nebraska can as well? Because high schools are run by the states, there isn’t as much of an opportunity for national regulation like there is in professional sports. As the Carroll High School allegations show, coaches who run programs may not be keeping tabs on their players’ steroid use, and may even be abetting them. So the only real thing to do is to mandate testing, but that costs money. The chance of every district in the country mandating steroid testing is pretty slim.

For all of these reasons, I think that high school steroid use is likely to be more lasting and more damaging than any professional scandal. It will continue to be an “epidemic” until being an overly muscled football player doesn’t give you national “Team of the Year” honors, doesn’t give coaches national recognition, and doesn’t provide a fast lane to a life of riches in the NFL which, by the way, doesn’t test for steroids.



STANLEY HU—THE TECH

Merritt S. Tam ’05 competes in the uneven bars during the women’s gymnastics competition on Saturday, Feb. 19, in duPont Athletic Center. Tam scored 36.950 to win the all-around competition, leading MIT to a 182.250-point victory over Rhode Island College and Boston University.

MIT Couples Dance Well
During Boston University
Dancesport Competition

By Jessica A. Lee
TEAM MEMBER

On Feb. 19, members of the MIT Ballroom Dance team were on their toes between 8 a.m. and 10 p.m. at Boston University’s Metcalf Ballroom for the BU Terrier Dancesport competition.

It was one of the season’s most tightly-packed competitions, with 28 events, 246 couples, and even a show all in a single day, pressing the organizers to place up to 16 couples on the dance floor at one time, even in fast-paced dances such as Quickstep and Viennese Waltz. The close quarters gave leaders a chance to practice their floorcraft — that is, the art of maneuvering along your line of dance without crashing into other couples or the judges.

Events covered four styles (Rhythm, Smooth, Standard, and Latin) and six possible levels (Newcomer, Bronze, Silver, Gold, Novice, and Open). In every final round, at least one MIT couple

placed in the top eight, except for the Rhythm dances, in which there were no entries from MIT above the Newcomer level.

MIT’s one Newcomer couple, Guadalupe O. Mota ’08 and Anna Poukchanski ’08, placed within the top five in every one of the four events they entered, including second in Rhythm.

Sixty-six couples entered the Bronze International Cha Cha/Rumba two-dance event, making for five grueling rounds of competition. Only eight couples ascended to the final round, and of these, four were from MIT. Shih-Yuan Liu and Jessica R. Huot ’06 placed second, Dmitry Abanine G and Chen Zhao ’07 third, Shlomo H. Meislin G and Olga S. Shevnyuk ’08 fourth, and Perry Shieh and Ipek Kotan sixth.

Not to be outdone by the rookies, MIT’s Open-level dancers dominated the International five-dance event, in which five of the top six couples had an MIT affiliation. They included Boris Berdnikov SM

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STANLEY HU—THE TECH

Bradley J. Sutton ’07 wins the pommel horse during the men’s gymnastics meet on Saturday, Feb. 20, at the duPont Athletic Center. Sutton placed second in the all-around competition (8.25), but the team lost to Temple University, 197.4–177.9.